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Albania: FYROM Reopens Border Crossing for Freight

AU2304180896 Tirana KOHA JONE in Albanian 23 Apr 96 p 15

[Unattributed report: Traffic Resumes at Bllate]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Trucks have begun to use the border crossing point at Bllate in Diber District, which connects Albania with Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM]. About eight months ago, the Macedonian customs authorities stopped truck traffic through this customs point, causing serious problems especially for traders in northeastern Albania. Traders were obliged to take their freight to the border crossing at Qafe Thane; they incurred significant trading losses because of the detour. [passage omitted]

Bulgaria: Totomirov Leaves for Brussels NATO Meeting

AU2304100096 Sofia Khorizont Radio Network in Bulgarian 0900 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] This morning, Colonel General Tsvetan Totomirov, chief of the Bulgarian Army General Staff, departed for Brussels to attend the session of the NATO Military Committee. His visit is at the invitation of Klaus Naumann, president of the NATO Military Committee, and General George Joulwan, supreme commander Allied Forces Europe.

This is what Gen. Totomirov told our correspondent, Dimitur Dimitrov, at Sofia airport about the purpose of his visit:

[Totomirov] The talks that I will hold will mainly concern the exercises that we will hold next year on operational compatibility and in connection with the lessons and conclusions that have been drawn from our practical experience so far of joint participation in the Partnership for Peace Initiative, as well as in relation to IFOR [Implementation Force].

Bulgaria: Dogan Comments on Turkey's Regional Priorities

AU1904173396 Sofia Khorizont Radio Network in Bulgarian 1600 GMT 19 Apr 96

[Report by correspondent Elena Dimitrova]

[FBIS Translated Text] Today, Ahmed Dogan, leader of the Movement for Rights and Freedoms [DPS], and the DPS delegation that accompanied him returned to Bulgaria from their official visit to the Republic of Turkey. Ahmed Dogan said that Turkey has started to reorient its foreign policy priorities from Central Asia to the Black Sea area of the Balkans. Dogan announced that, by June at the latest, Turkey will take radical measures to relax the visa regulations. The DPS leader rejected the allegation that he had received instructions from his Turkish hosts not to permit the formation of a Christian axis in the Balkans.

Bulgaria: Zhelev Deplores BSP Praise for SDS Candidate

AU2304180496 Sofia Khorizont Radio Network in Bulgarian 1700 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] If the opposition wants to win the presidential elections, it must appear united in those elections, President Zhelyu Zhelev said on 23 April at the general assembly of the Alliance for Bulgaria Association.

Those elections are not a goal in themselves. I view them in the context of prompting early parliamentary elections, President Zhelev recalled his old thesis. However, he expressed disagreement with certain personal attacks, which representatives of the Union of Democratic Forces [SDS] address to him in meetings with the public. This is what President Zhelev said further:

[Begin recording] I think that this is an intolerant manner of conducting a political struggle. If things continue in the same manner they could negatively affect the primaries. If the primaries and the related campaign continue to exacerbate relations within the opposition, instead of contributing to the opposition's unity, they will do the opposite, and thus lose any meaning.

I am also disturbed by certain other factors, for example, the praise the Bulgarian Socialist Party lavishes upon my partner. Those Judas kisses of the ideological opponent should disturb any politician.

Personally, I would be greatly confused by such an attitude, and I would ask myself: Damn! Whose candidate am I? Why are my opponents praising me, while all the mud is being thrown at the other candidate of the democratic opposition, without sparing any means? [end recording]

Bulgaria: Article Analyzes Videnov's Party Strategy

AU2304145896 Sofia SEGA in Bulgarian 18-24 Apr 96 pp 20-21

[Article by Andrey Raychev: "BSP: Rose Mutates Into an Orchid"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In 1990, the Bulgarian Socialist Party [BSP] led by Lilov and Lukanov was walking along a road and came to a crossroads that had two signposts; one reading Romania, the other—Hungary.

The "Romanian" direction was all downhill: It would include a demand to bring indignant miners to Sofia after the fire in the BSP headquarters, so that they could pour their wrath on the heads of the Union of Democratic Forces [SDS] members. Afterward, our Securitate was supposed to establish direct control over the opposition publications, while planted agents would become leaders of the opposition parties. Finally, the land would ostensibly be distributed to the real peasants. No restitution would be allowed. Force would be demonstrated two or three times, so that the scared people would know that beating was still allowed.

All that would be necessary in order to achieve all this to preserve the State Security, of course, in a suitable form, and "radically," in one strike, ban the Bulgarian Communist Party. Afterward, it would rapidly be restored as a nationalistic or similar formation.

Thus Bulgaria, again put under control by force, could rapidly build bridges toward the foreign investments. The first leader and his people would have guaranteed the investments. All this, together with two or three anti-Russian gestures could guarantee a calm dominance over the country for decades. What we could have would be an adapted Chinese model in which the private sector would be allowed to develop to a certain extent, in other words, a New Economic Policy.

The other direction—the one that was selected—was all upward. It presupposed, as Andrey Bundzhulov said, a neutralizing-surviving strategy on the part of the BSP, within the framework of a liberal model for Bulgaria. This strategy required three prerequisites:

—The BSP should change completely—it must leave the government, relinquish its property, become geopolitically independent, relax its structures, leave the Army and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, gradually adopt a social-democratic ideology, and so on;

—To implement all the aforementioned things as late as possible;

—To not initiate a counterattack, even if the moment was very favorable.

Precisely those three prerequisites helped the BSP to become a participant in the transition, rather than its casualty, and gain time for:

—Decreasing political tension in our society;

—Including a sufficient number of "reds" in the new capitalist class;

—Crystallizing the processes within the SDS until it progresses from a mass, shallow, and generally democratic formation to a more narrow, centralized, and anticommunist formation;

—Preserving the BSP's large membership and teaching the party members to accept changes;

—Incorporating even the most drastic processes within the framework of a nonviolent and legal model of social cooperation.

All those factors facilitated the final success of the BSP's policy in the last six years. They can be reduced to a single and amazingly simple public formula: centrism and willingness to effect consensus.

This formula allowed the BSP to achieve the impossible.

Let us begin with the ethnic issue. Burdened by the revival process and suspected of nationalism, the BSP strengthened those suspicions by certain moves it made. However, it did not disturb it at all to be the party which registered the Movement for Rights and Freedoms [DPS] and be almost in a coalition government with the DPS for two years.

Let us continue with the issue of property. The people suspected the BSP of a secret intention to nationalize the property. However, the BSP initiated the most liberal reform in eastern Europe and actually produced the entire major capital in the country.

Let us conclude with geopolitics. Without making a single statement against NATO the BSP simultaneously succeeded in suggesting that it was an opponent of the Atlantic idea, and yet gain a position from which it could benefit from its anti-Atlantic notion.

We could continue with more examples form all areas of life. The most important thing is to understand that those were not "maneuvers," despite the fact that a part of the voters think precisely so. This actually was the core of an essentially centrist policy. This policy never closed the door and never imposed any ideological veto over any decision (including the monarchy variant).

From a public point of view, in this manner, the BSP created an image of national responsibility and an antidogmatic stance. From an internal party point of view, in this manner, the BSP created the foundation of a real pluralism. There is no internal ideological current that will not join a party with such a policy. Everyone finds his place and gets a chance to assert his line to a certain degree.

To all this, one could add a basic confrontation, symbolized by the figures of Andrey Lukanov and Aleksandur Lilov. It is strong enough to produce tendencies in the party organism and sufficiently weak to be able to threaten the party unity.

These internal architectonics of the BSP were deliberately constructed in part, and partly they are the result of certain circumstances. However, all the results were achieved because the basic principle—centrism and willingness to effect consensus—was followed.

As a political figure, Zhan Videnov (and by this name I mean a circle of people), became BSP leader precisely on the basis of the aforementioned formula and with the help of the weak resistance within the BSP. He was, so to speak, a figure of unity, and very successfully implemented this role of his. The absolute majority the BSP obtained on 18 December 1994 is the most solid proof of this. However, afterward, Videnov decided to change the signposts on the 1990 crossroads.

There is a well-known experiment in psychology: You see a picture of a kitten. In each of the next pictures, one line in the drawing of the kitten changes, until, in the final picture, it becomes a dog. Human nature is such that many people do not grasp the change—many continue to see the kitten, even when there is a dog in front of their eyes.

This is how Videnov changed—line by line—the BSP's internal architectonics. This is of special importance: Videnov is perhaps the first BSP leader since 10 November 1989 who is conducting a well-thought-out policy without publicly explaining it and without expressing it in ideological formulations.

Prior to the 10 March plenum, he did not announce any intentions but rather provided a postfactum explanation. He was forced by the situation to respond to certain tendencies and formulate theses that explained a policy he was already conducting.

The opposite was characteristic of both Lilov and Lukanov. They used to declare their intentions, somehow achieve public internal party approval of their intentions, and only then translate them into specific political and/or cadre moves. Actually, this is how Videnov himself was elected party leader. Long before the congress, Lilov began to explain that he was looking for an heir not from the next, but from the youngest party generation.

It is here that we see Videnov's special pragmatism: He is far more interested in what really happens than in any doctrine or an ideological formulation of what is happening. This is the source of his skill in utilizing procedural technique. The procedure is the best manner of asserting something without even mentioning it. In addition, Videnov is gradually replacing the BSP Supreme Council with another forum—some sort of a coalition "conference," where he confers with Gaytandzhiev and Shivarov, in other words—with himself. Videnov is dancing with Videnov....

However, the BSP's architectonics are not the expression of someone's designs, slyness, or strategy. They are the political equivalent of the endlessly complicated and complex structure of the red electorate, which includes poor and rich, intellectuals and analphabets, Jews and Gypsies, old people and youth, Stalinists and liberals—all in all about 2 million people.

The new architectonics, asserted by Videnov himself, will inevitably affect the structure of the red electorate. How, specifically?

Relinquishing the centrism and willingness to effect consensus will affect (and already began to affect) two groups—the intelligentsia and the private businessmen. Those two groups have not only their own electoral weight, but also a strong additional influence, which will inevitable evoke corrosive processes along the red voters.

What is even more important is that Videnov will have to change the basic and well-functioning formulas in the BSP—instead of consensus and reform, he will have to promote something from the type of "statehood and order." However, this will narrow down the BSP's social basis and present the SDS with a strong and tested ideological weapon—the consensus (or as Petur Stoyanov already put it—"love instead of hatred"). In addition, the entire responsibility for the first more-significant decrease in the standard of living will be fully attributed to the BSP. As far as "order" is concerned, only a power regime is able of giving the Bulgarians here and now the order they have been accustomed to.

However, then it will become absolutely unclear why Stalinists must be members of the same party as the liberals, and why the rich must go to the same party meetings as the poor. In other words, rapid processes of differentiation will follow, and they will either cause the emergence of a strong Bulgarian Communist Party or the direct neocommunist degradation of the BSP.

This is the price of the secret transformation of the kitten into a dog.

Bulgaria: Opposition to Videnov in BSP Analyzed

AU2304144896 Sofia DEMOKRATSIYA in Bulgarian 19 Apr 96 p 10

[Article by Katya Ivanova: "Socialist Party Seeks Ways To Unite Through Duels and Splits"]

[FBIS Translated Text] At an extraordinary session of the BSP [Bulgarian Socialist Party] Executive Bureau on 19 April, Deputy Prime Minister Doncho Konakchiev is said to have declared that the party leadership cannot go on any further with its present membership. According to Executive Bureau members, his words rang out like a direct threat issued in Videnov's name regarding personnel changes in the Executive Bureau, and the names first mentioned in this context were those of Nikolay Kamov, Georgi Purvanov, and Yuriy Borisov. According to its statute, the Executive Bureau is elected by the BSP Supreme Council, in which Videnov still holds a majority. At the moment, the bureau consists of 17 members (Anzhel Vagenshtayn, the 18th member, is on diplomatic service abroad). Of these, only two are untouchable: Aleksandur Marinov, head of the Sofia BSP organization, and Sashka Karakasheva, chairman of the BSP Control Commission, who are ex officio members of the Executive Bureau and not elected by the Supreme Council.

It should be clear to the party leader that when he eliminates people from his own close circle because they disagree with him, he only deepens the conflicts with them, and this is becoming a reason for the consolidation of the internal opposition to Videnov within the BSP.

The first accusations leveled against the BSP leader, as far back as March 1993, also concerned his authoritative management style. Today, one has the impression that Videnov has converted this tendency, to which he has been subject since he first assumed office, into a means of survival.

At BSP headquarters, they regard BSP Deputy Chairman Georgi Purvanov as part of the intraparty opposition, even though he rarely provides grounds for such a claim in his public statements. In recent weeks, however, he has openly opposed Videnov on a number of occasions. In the Parliamentary Foreign Policy Commission, he joined Kamov in not voting against the SDS [Union of Democratic Forces] proposal for the National Assembly to issue a declaration against USSR-2, preferring instead to abstain.

Purvanov persuaded Lukanov and Ananieva to accept the crowned lion on the state coat of arms and formed a lobby in support of his own idea in opposition to Videnov. About 10 days ago, he summoned to a meeting at BSP headquarters only five of the members of the 19-strong BSP Ideological Development Commission, which he chairs, and convinced them to vote for his proposed coat of arms, in opposition to the one proposed by the BSP. This provoked a scandal inside the Executive Bureau. Lukanov, Ananieva, Lukanov, Miroslav Popov, Valentin Vatsev (who left the meeting before the vote was taken), and Ivo Atanasov, who is not in the commission, were accused by Videnov of promoting their own ideas without permission as the party's official view. The BSP has never revised his proposal of a lion rampant with a mane and without a crown, Vatsev commented on the following day.

There is little likelihood that the "crown" lobby within the BSP parliamentary group will be broken up by the removal of Georgi Purvanov from his deputy chairman's post, since Lilov himself is a member of this lobby. Any settling of accounts with Lilov would only consolidate and strengthen the ambitions of the former BSP leaders to attack the prime minister with regard to the national coat of arms as well.

Kamov has become an even more serious threat to Videnov. A handful of people link Kamov's name with the post of BSP spokesman. Until recently, he merely lurked in the background in the Executive Bureau, one of those Socialists who accept decisions in silence, never comment on them publicly, and never have any information. The change in Kamov amazed not only his colleagues. Within the space of two months, the parliamentarian has become a principal accuser of this own leader. Some say this is at Lilov's instigation, while others claim it is because of his ambition to run in the presidential elections.

At the time of the March plenum on the BSP's term in government, Kamov demanded changes in the leadership of the BSP parliamentary group, insisting that Premyanov should take responsibility for the Socialists' failures in their legislative activities.

One of the more serious conflicts between Kamov and Videnov broke out after Yeltsin's invitation to Bulgaria to join USSR-2. In contrast to Purvanov, Nikolay Kamov did not reject the SDS draft declaration against USSR-2, but was the first man in the BSP leadership to demand that Videnov immediately issue a negative response to the invitation. The Socialists' spokesman directly threatened the prime minister's authority within the party by supporting Lilov's and Lukanov's proposal of holding an extraordinary BSP congress.

Last, but not least, there is one further argument why Videnov should want to remove Kamov from the Executive Bureau: The BSP spokesman is over 40 years old, and those responsible for the Socialists' presidential election campaign have not included him amount the possible candidates for the presidential duo. Despite the fact that the Nationwide Committee for Defense of National Interests has proposed him as vice president, with Sendov as president. The question arises as to what will become of the BSP if Nikolay Kamov becomes the red understudy in the presidential elections, continuing the trend started in the local elections, in which parallel Socialist candidates stood in 28 municipalities.

The third candidate earmarked for removal, namely Yuriy Borisov, made his play in the party game of roulette for the presidential elections, by declaring his support for Lilov. The presidential election campaign has become one of the most serious problems for the ruling party this year. Videnov has to make a choice between Sendov, Lilov, and Pirinski. The three represent three different party camps—those of Videnov, Lilov himself, and Lukanov. Investigations carried out within the BSP itself point to Pirinski as the candidate, but his nomination is a loss for Videnov's standing. People at BSP headquarters consider that not only the unity of the party, but also the survival of its government depend on who is chosen to be the BSP presidential candidate.

The three men earmarked as presidential candidates have also adopted an active position regarding the Granitski scandal. Kamov was one of the handful of Socialists who asked Marinova and Premyanov precisely whose interests would be served by a further change in the top management of Bulgarian National Television. He permitted himself to comment that changes on the grounds that "the party organizations are dissatisfied" or "the political line is not retained" have become part of the government's and the party leadership's style of working.

Even if Videnov manages to formally neutralize the problematical Kamov, Borisov, and Purvanov by removing them from their party posts, the prime minister is unlikely to find it as easy to eliminate the rest of his opponents, who are exploiting the conflicts within Bulgarian National Television by defending the current television chief. Those involved in this include Andrey Lukanov, Aleksandur Lilov, and DUMA Editor in Chief Stefan Prodev. The battle between Videnov and the official party organ has continued into a new dimension, in the form of television scandals. For the time being, the prime minister is winning; the Executive Bureau adopted a decision to remove Granitski, but the BSP parliamentary group will have the last word. Within the group, the majority is protesting against Videnov's personnel policy by supporting Granitski.

Videnov will also find it difficult to quickly deal with Filip Bokov in connection with the dispute regarding NATO. Whereas Nikolay Kamov has asked the Council of Ministers and the BSP to present to the public in written form what it regards as the priorities in Bulgaria's relations with Western and Eastern Europe, with the North Atlantic structures, and Russia, Bokov has insisted on Bulgaria's full-fledged membership in NATO. The viewpoint adopted by the international wing at BSP headquarters last week revealed that it includes a group of Socialists who defend the position of guaranteeing our national security through the North Atlantic Pact organization. National Assembly Deputy Bokov has turned out to be the main proponent of this idea. His position is interesting, because he has never revealed his pro-NATO orientation in public. Sources within the BSP predict that from this point on he will intervene in the conflict. On the one hand, he may preserve his silence, fearing blackmail in connection with his son's arrest, but on the other hand, it may be difficult to predict what he may decide to do.

Bulgaria: Employment Service Claims Unemployment Falling

AU1804135196 Sofia Khorizont Radio Network in Bulgarian 1300 GMT 18 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At a news briefing in Sofia today, the National Employment Service [NES] announced that the total number of unemployed in March was 424,000. Attention was drawn to the continuing tendency for unemployment and redundancy numbers to fall, accompanied by a rise in the number of people finding new jobs, a trend that started in February.

According to the NES, during March there was a rise in unemployment among young people, which is attributed to young men returning to the job market after completing their national military service. Demand for manpower was relatively high, while 30 percent more people were engaged in temporary work programs than in February.

Since the beginning of the year, the NES has carried over 3,000 checks, the majority of which were connected with the allocation of unemployment benefits. The checks established 1,700 cases of violations, in which people who had their own companies continued to claim unemployment benefit. Those concerned will have to repay the amounts received.

Czech Republic: Clinton Seen 'on the Defensive' With Yeltsin

AU2304131896 Prague LIDOVE NOVINY in Czech 22 Apr 96 p 1

[Commentary by Petra Prochazkova: "An Election Matinee"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Everyone breathed a sigh of relief. No scandal, no intrigue, no one left the Moscow summit on nuclear safety offended, everyone signed everything, and everyone agreed with everything. The atmosphere of perfect harmony continued on Sunday [21 April] during the bilateral talks between Clinton and Yeltsin. What the two statesmen actually talked about is not being made public. On the outside, their meeting was reminiscent of a matinee for old ladies.

On Friday [19 April], the more than 2,000 accredited journalists had hoped that the problems surrounding NATO enlargement—supposed to have been discussed just marginally, but discussed nevertheless—would be a reason for banner headlines.

The initial comments from Sergey Medvedev, the Kremlin's press secretary, sounded promising. He had expressed Russia's concern that NATO's enlargement by the Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary would be accompanied by the deployment of NATO's nuclear arsenal on the territory of these countries. He made it sound as if this were the paramount wish of the governments of these countries. At the same time, however, their politicians have merely ventured to indicate that they will enter anywhere, anytime, and without any of the restrictions that Russia wants to dictate.

Moscow now made use of the meeting on nuclear safety to exert further pressure. Successfully. Among other things, because cold feet did not permit B. Clinton to react with dignity to B. Yeltsin's self-assured statements. The Russian president announced at a joint news conference that NATO enlargement would not be discussed for a specific period at the request of Russia. Immediately afterwards, without blushing in front of the whole world, he said that no military operations have been carried out in Chechnya since 31 March, when he announced his Chechen peace plan. B. Clinton remained on the defensive, for which the U.S. Congress has frequently reproached him.

The main objective of all of the talks that took place in Moscow over the weekend was not to ignite any serious problems. No wonder. Clinton is betting on Yeltsin, and presidential elections will be held in Russia on 16 June.

Czech Republic: Czech IFOR Troops 'Have Earned Respect'

AU2204154096 Prague MLADA FRONTA DNES in Czech 20 Apr 96 p 9

[CTK report: "The Czech IFOR Troops Have Earned Respect, Says Their Commander"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Zagreb—The commander of the Czech contingent of the multinational IFOR [Implementation Force] forces in Bosnia, Colonel Jiri Sedivy, is convinced that the Czech troops have earned respect among the local population and also among the representatives of the opposing armies in Bosnia for their tough, uncompromising approach to fulfilling the Dayton peace accords.

"There are no longer exchanges of fire or more major conflicts on the battalion's territory. The troops have carried out their task very well; they are absolutely impartial," said Sedivy. According to him, the most crucial spot on the territory of the Czech Army's 6th Mechanized Battalion is the village of Otoka, which was originally Muslim. It lies in the separation zone, which has been divided by the Una River into Serb and Muslim parts. "The Muslims who were expelled from the Serb part want to go back. They would like, for example, to visit the graves of their relatives. There are provocations from their side that the Serbs do not intend to put up with," said Sedivy.

"Our troops are under stress and tension at the local post; they seize some arms almost every day. Since we have been adopting a very tough approach to the offenders, however, the situation has calmed down," he emphasized.

According to Sedivy, the town of Prijedor on Bosnia's Serb territory is, from a political point of view, a critical area. The senior representatives of this community are clearly opposed to IFOR. Sedivy added that these officials are suspected of having carried out ethnic cleansing.

Czech Republic: Klaus Favors Referendum on EU

AU2404084196 Prague PRAVO in Czech 23 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by "(mhr)": "The Prime Minister Favors a Referendum on the EU"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prerov—At a meeting on Monday [22 April] with students from the Integrated High School in Prerov, Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus said that he favors a referendum in the event of the Czech Republic's entry into the European Union (EU). At the same time, however, he is opposed to a referendum in the case of admission into NATO.

A referendum is something that, in my opinion, should take place once in a generation, and, if the question is raised regarding whether one should be held in the event of the Czech Republic's admission into NATO, my answer will be no, said Vaclav Klaus. In the EU's case, "this will be something that will mean a considerable loss of independence and of our sovereignty; there is no danger of this in the event of our admission into NATO," said the prime minister.

Czech Republic: Klaus on Minister Holan, Italian Elections

LD2304223896 Prague Radiozurnal Radio Network in Czech 1600 GMT 23 Apr 96

[Regular weekly interview with Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus, by Bohumir Mazac—live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Mazac] [Passage omitted] At the end of last week, Defense Minister Vilem Holan said that in the past four years the Army has been on the periphery of the government's interest.

[Klaus] I am not going to comment on this issue because, as a matter of principle, I do not comment on individual ministers. I am loyal and always refer to the government as a whole, but in this case I really have to say resolutely and categorically that every ministry has enjoyed the sort of attention its minister was able to attract to it. Of course, in this respect, some ministers have proved to be less able than others, that much is true. [passage omitted]

[Mazac] Let us now look at Italy, where the elections were won by the grouping of the left. This means that the left now has a majority in many countries of the European Community. Could this in any way influence the future shape of Europe?

[Klaus] Of course it could, but, as far as Italy is concerned, it is still a country in the process of restructuring. To use a term usually applied to postcommunist countries, it is a country undergoing a process of transformation, a country in search of a proper political structure, and one that has not yet created properly consolidated political parties, be they on the right or on the left. There are still a number of parties with names not unlike those we find in the east, such as Forza Italia and the Northern League. This is a very rudimentary political structure, and I think the latest Italian elections have not decided anything of substance. I expect that the process of restructuring of the Italian political scene will continue.

[Mazac] Thank you for the interview.

Czech Republic: Holan: Army's Combat Readiness Major Success

AU2304141296 Prague DENNI TELEGRAF in Czech 20 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by "(nos)": "Holan Considers the Army To Be Combat Ready"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prague—Defense Minister Vilem Holan considers the restoration of the Army's combat readiness following the collapse of the federation to be a major success for his department. The minister is of the opinion that, in the near future, after the elections, more attention should be paid to the Army than is being paid to it today.

"Following the breakup of the Republic, only the torso of the Army was left. However, its combat readiness has been restored in the wake of redeployment," said the minister literally. Holan sees another success in the good results achieved by our troops in international missions and exercises. The Czech Republic's entry into NATO is just a matter of time, and the date of its admission is getting closer, claims Holan. "The NATO member countries are also scrutinizing—apart from their standard of equipment and training—political refinement and democratic stability among the new applicants for membership; the Czech Republic meets these criteria," said the minister. The minister described the slow implementation of the tasks demarcated, the lack of quality soldiers in the noncommissioned officer posts, and the constant affliction of bullying as the problems in the department. "Quality noncommissioned officers generally apply to the colleges and then return in an officer's tank. The situation should be resolved by a new promotion scale," explained the minister. According to Holan, another thing our Army lacks is a supradepartmental commission that would supervise, for example, army tenders. In Holan's opinion, the future government should give more priority to the Army and security, both in the coalition agreement and in the budget. Holan did not rule out the possibility of cutting basic military service to 10 or nine months.

Czech Republic: Right-Wing Youth Organization Founded

AU2304145296 Prague DENNI TELEGRAF in Czech 20 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by "(hyn)": "Democratic Youth Has Its Own Party"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Hradec Kralove—The preparatory committee for the European Democratic Youth [Evropska demokraticka mladez] (EDM) of the Czech Republic has commenced its activity in Hradec Kralove.

The organization will affiliate right-wing oriented young people under age 35 from throughout the Republic. Although the members of the preparatory committee are, at the moment, young Civic Democratic Party and Civic Democratic Alliance members, this organization will not be immediately bound to any specific political party. Representatives from the leadership of the European youth organization DEMYC [Democratic Youth Community of Europe], which is part of the European Democratic Union, also attended the news conference held by the new EDM. DEMYC General Secretary Mathias Peterlik said that the newly established EDM has, in view of the successful post-November [1989] developments in our country, a chance of occupying a very strong position among the other European organizations of this kind.

Czech Republic: Privatization of Regional Airports Planned

96CH0070E Prague PRAGUE POST in English 5 Mar 96 p 6

[Article by Brendan McNally: "Local Czech Airports Prepare To Privatize"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sometime within the next two months, Transport Minister Vladimir Budinsky will submit plans for privatizing the nation's three state-owned regional airports in Karlovy Vary (Carlsbad), Brno and Ostrava.

By selling them off, the ministry hopes to spur the natural growth of the airports and of regionally based air transportation.

Each airport appears set to develop in its own way. Karlovy Vary will accommodate the tourist industry, with private and charter flights coming in mainly from Germany. Ostrava is already well on its way to becoming a regional hub for the locally based Air Ostrava's scheduled flights to Prague, Warsaw and Vienna and for charters to Greece, Turkey and other vacation spots in the Mediterranean.

Brno will likely offer some scheduled and charter flights, but will serve primarily as a cargo and general avaition airport.

According to the Transport Ministry, privatization efforts will begin shortly after the coming national elections, and should be completed within a year.

Although the ministry has not yet determined the methods of privatization, project plans are already being drawn up in the individual cities. Karlovy Vary is expected to be the first regional airport to be privatized, and Mayor Igor Savic said the town should take a majority stake in the company owning it.

"Interest in the airport is great, but only the bids of some six companies seem to be viable. Three or four (bidders), including the town, most (likely) could own it jointly," Savic said.

The Karlovy Vary airport covers about 110 hectares (271 acres) and can accommodate aircraft holding up to 120 passengers as well as private, business and cargo aircraft. It already offers a complete range of international services, including customs and passport control.

In Brno, the Brunea travel agency is planning its own privatization project for the Brno-Turany airport. Company representative Hubert Prikryl said the Brunea plan calls for a 20-percent share to be taken by the city of Brno, private companies taking up a further 20 percent, while the National Property Fund retains a 30-percent stake.

The Brunea plan also calls for a four-fold expansion of the Brno terminal and for a hotel to be built nearby. Prikryl says the airport has experienced 100 percent growth since 1993, and expects to have 140,000 passengers departing throughout 1996, mostly on charter flights. Prikryl says they expect that by 2000, air traffic from Brno could exceed 400,000 passengers annually.

But of the three, Ostrava's Mosnov airport already seems to have the best prospects for future business. Located close to Poland and Slovakia, Mosnov is fast becoming a regional hub. Formerly a military airport designed for large transport aircraft, Mosnov has a large runway capable of handling the largest jumbo jets. At this point, Mosnov's business is evenly divided between charter and scheduled fights. Transport Ministry spokeswoman Romana Lodinova said one of the reasons the ministry wants to privatize the three airports is that once they are expanded, they will be able to serve as diversionary airports for Prague's Ruzyne airport in the all-too-common event of bad weather. Ruzyne, the country's main international terminal, will remain state-owned.

Czech Republic: Koruna's Value Allowed To Fluctuate

96CH0077A Prague PRAGUE POST in English 6-12 Mar 96 p 1

[Article by Julie Jette: "Czech National Bank Lengthens Tether on Crown Exchange Rate"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Like a liberal-minded parent allowing a teenager more freedom in some activities in order to gain more leverage in others, the Czech National Bank (CNB) hopes to gain more control over the national money supply while allowing the crown's value more space to roam.

"The chain is a little longer. They still have some fixing, but they have a little more room to move," said Boris Gomez, an analyst with ING Baring Capital Markets.

When the CNB announced on February 28 that it would expand the fluctuation band of the Czech crown from plus or minus 0.5 percent daily to plus or minus 7.5 percent daily, CNB Governor Josef Tosovsky said it did so to gain a better grip on inflation.

In simple terms, the widening means that the exchange value of the crown could theoretically jump or drop in value by 7.5 percent on any given day. But such an extreme change is unlikely, because the CNB says it will intervene to support the crown's value when necessary.

Economists had predicted for some time that the CNB would lengthen its leash on the crown's value, but none predicted the band would be so greatly expanded.

"We have expected this broadening, but we expected the maximum widening would be 5 percent, not 7.5," said Karel Jezek, spokesman for Zivnostenska banka.

"It maybe shocked us a little bit that (the expansion) was so large," said Jindra Vorenka, who heads the international sales and trading division for Komercni banka.

The monetary policy change comes at a politically sensitive time for Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus, who faces a national election in June.

Although the widening is not expected to result in major exchange-rate instability, Minister of Economy Karel Dyba, a member of Klaus' ruling ODS party, argued against an expansion of the band as recently as two weeks before the CNB announced its decision.

"It is, of course, up to the central bank. But in my opinion, the situation on the current account...does not call for any fundamental change in economic policy, including exchange-rate policy," Dyba told news agency CTK on February 16.

For some time, the CNB had complained that much of the foreign capital flowing into the country was drawn by high interest rates and practically no exchange-rate risk. The short-term money that investors socked away in interest-bearing accounts did little for the country—except to increase inflation.

Most experts agreed that the measure should prove effective.

"For (stopping) short-term currency inflow, it will definitely work," said Michal Susak, head of fixed income for CS First Boston.

Zivnostenska banka's Jezek said that speculators seemed to be fulfilling the CNB's hope that widening the fluctuation band would stem the tide of speculative investment.

Gomez also said that speculators were leaving the market. "What's going on is basically a lot of selling. (The market) is really volatile."

But Vorenka said he hadn't observed a mass exodus of investors.

"They start thinking about it, but everybody is waiting to see what will happen," he said. "I see general nervousness on the market, but this is nothing new."

If the widening of the band is to be effective in reducing the money supply, it must work on two fronts: first, by discouraging speculators because of the higher exchange-rate risk; second, by allowing the CNB to increase interest rates without fear of attracting more money from abroad.

However, Patria Finance's chief economist, Zdenek Tuma, said it is tough to tell how much of the inflow of capital is actually interest-rate sensitive.

Few experts believe that the crown's value will actually fluctuate dramatically due to the band expansion.

Although research firm Nomura unveiled a politically explosive report in late December predicting that the government would devalue the crown by 20 percent after the June elections, it later apologized for the report. Most other economists had been predicting, and continue to predict, a modest appreciation.

Slovakia: Kovac Views Bilateral Treaty Ratification

AU2304150496 Budapest NEPSZABADSAG in Hungarian 23 Apr 96 p 3

[Interview with Slovak President Michal Kovac by Gyorgy Jozsef Farkas; place and date not given: "Kovac Is Ready To Ratify the Basic Treaty"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Passage omitted] [Farkas] Mr. President, how would you evaluate the parliament decision that also adopted interpretative addenda together with the Hungarian-Slovak basic treaty?

[Kovac] First of all, I think that it is a very positive and welcome fact that our parliament also approved the basic treaty, so nothing hinders its ratification any more, an act of historic reconciliation between the two nations, a milestone in our bilateral relations. At the same time, this is also a considerable contribution to our common strategic goal, namely to join NATO and the EU, because the basic treaty also strengthens stability in the Central European region. As for the aforementioned addenda, it is obvious that these additions make no difference whatsoever on the basic treaty because they do not affect the Hungarian side in any way whatsoever; they only try to give a uniform answer to different interpretations emerging on the Slovak side, in order to make sure that they do not lead to possible tensions within the Slovak society later.

[Farkas] What constitutional tasks are you facing now after the parliament decision?

[Kovac] In this process, the president is facing administrative tasks and we are now studying the details. According to our Constitution, it is the task of the president to ratify international agreements, and he fulfills this task in cooperation with the Foreign Ministry. Of course, it is a pleasant obligation and task for me to participate in this because, as I already mentioned, we are talking about a real historic step.

[Farkas] Has parliament already sent you the necessary documentation?

[Kovac] Yes. I received the text of the basic treaty and the parliament decision of 26 March; all we need now is coordination between the Slovak and Hungarian Foreign Ministries on who should carry out the exchange of documents and when. According to our Constitution, the government prepares international treaties and submits them to Parliament which, in turn, approves them, and then the president ratifies them. The experts are now clarifying the details.

[Farkas] Prior to the basic treaty, the Slovak Parliament adopted the bills on territorial division and the modification of the penal code, but you sent these bills back for further debate. What do you expect from the new debate?

[Kovac] We are talking about two different laws here. In the first case, my steps were mainly motivated by my concern regarding the future legal status of our capital city because Bratislava would lose a major part of its independence. As for the penal code, I am really convinced here that the modifications contradict the Constitution and the Declaration of Human Rights. These modifications refer to causes that, in my view, do not exist, so there is no justification for further strengthening the defense of the state at the detriment of human rights. Of course, it is difficult to predict the new position of the Parliament on this issue and, although the prime minister strongly defends the decisions, I do not exclude the possibility that the deputies will change their previous opinions on certain points. If, however, parliament again adopts the bill in the original version, a group of deputies will probably turn to the Constitutional Court. [passage omitted]

Slovakia: Hungarian Cultural Institutions Seen Threatened

LD2304211096 Budapest Duna TV in Hungarian 1900 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] There is a law in the making in Slovakia about the Matica Slovenska, the cultural and social institution. This bill, according to the leaders of the Coexistence movement [of ethnic Hungarians], would put the Hungarian cultural institutions of Slovakia into an impossible situation.

[Correspondent] According to the bill, the management of Slovak cultural life would come entirely under the scope of authority of the Matica Slovenska. Thus the issues of organization, documentation, and finance of minority cultural life would become the responsibility of the Matica, well known for its frequently voiced nationalistic views. So, instead of direct state support, the sums earmarked for minority cultural projects would go straight on the account of the Slovak organization. What is more, the Matica would have a say in the preparation of text books and the curriculum.

Arpad Duka Zolyomi, deputy chairman of Coexistence, said in connection with this that he is aware of the fact that the amendment to the education law has been prepared and it gives the relevant ministry the right to change the language of education.

Slovakia: Foreign Minister Discusses Visit to Latvia

LD1904174096 Bratislava Rozhlasova Stanica Slovensko Network in Slovak 1600 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Slovak Foreign Minister Juraj Schenk left for an official visit to the Republic of Latvia yesterday evening. This is the first ever visit by a Slovak foreign minister to this Baltic republic. This afternoon, we phoned Riga to interview Minister Schenk about his visit:

[Begin Schenk recording] As far as the results of my visit are concerned, I am greatly satisfied with my welcome here and the opportunities for talks. I met not only my Latvian counterpart, but also the Latvian prime minister, and I held talks with the parliament chairwoman and the chairman of its Foreign Committee.

Perhaps the most important thing is that we signed a free trade zone agreement with Latvia that is one of the main preconditions for Latvia to become rather quickly a full-fledged member of the enlarged Central European Free Trade Association.

As far as economic matters are concerned, we received several interesting offers. The most interesting offer for Slovakia and Slovak entrepreneurs is probably the one inviting Slovaks to participate extensively in the process of privatization [in Latvia], above all in the privatization of very important Latvian ports at the time when Latvia aspires to become a very important crossroads of transit routes.

We naturally also discussed a number of fundamental political issues and agreed that our two countries shared the same foreign policy aims and this contributed to our closer cooperation. We also agreed that it will not be beneficial for the European Union associated member states to engage in any unnecessary competition over who will join the European Union sooner and who will join it only later. We should cooperate with each other to create such conditions that will make it possible for all of us to meet the EU's criteria.

An important part of our discussion was the issue of NATO's enlargement, an issue that is extremely interesting for Slovakia, because just two or three days ago Latvia was visited by UN Secretary General Javier Solana, who will visit Slovakia at the end of April. [passage omitted]

Slovakia: Court Decision on 'Golden Share' Discussed

AU2204090696 Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak 19 Apr 96 p 1

[CTK report: "According to Jan Ducky, the Constitutional Court Did Not Altogether Cancel the Golden Share"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Slovak Economy Minister Jan Ducky accepted with a consternation the decision of the Constitutional Court of the Slovak Republic on the anticonstitutional nature of the state's golden share in strategically important enterprises and companies. "I do not understand it," the minister, who, as he said about himself, is the spiritual father of the idea to introduce the golden share in strategically important enterprises, told CTK. The government coalition pushed the law through in the National Council of the Slovak Republic twice in a row despite protests from the opposition and the disagreement of the president. The Constitutional Court described the part of the law dealing with the golden share as anticonstitutional because this stipulation would curb the ownership rights of the other shareholders, whereby the equality of all owners enshrined in the Constitution of the Slovak Republic would be broken. Ducky pointed out, however, that the Constitutional Court of the Slovak Republic did not cancel the golden share, but rather only one of the conditions stating that the relevant companies were to include in their statutes that the authority of the state would be maintained in these enterprises.

"Of course, I will make certain of securing these rights in the enterprises to which this would apply, without referring to law but rather on the basis of argumentation and the agreement of the shareholders," Minister Ducky emphasized. To the question of how he means to implement it, he replied that the state, or rather the Economy Ministry on its behalf, will sign an "agreement based on a consensus and advantage of the ministerial view" with the aforementioned strategic enterprises.

Several such agreements between the ministry and certain enterprises have been prepared, according to Minister Ducky, and concluded even prior to the decision of the Constitutional Court of the Slovak Republic, so as he emphasized, there will be nothing to discuss in these instances. "This law had a single fault. It should have been adopted prior to privatization, but that is not my mistake," Ducky said.

Hungary: Editorial Assesses Moscow Summit Prospects

AU2304123896 Budapest NEPSZABADSAG in Hungarian 20 Apr 96 p 3

[Editorial by Oszkar Fuzes: "Chain Reaction"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Normally, one should be happy that the world's eight most important countries are holding a summit on nuclear safety in Moscow. However, the big-power security system based on Soviet-American confrontation and mutual deterrence disintegrated six years ago. According to diligent statistics experts, 159 new bloody crises have emerged since then, and the pace is so fast that this figure might become obsolete as we go to press.

The United States reluctantly fumbles in the thankless position of sole world power, and the middle-sized powers in Europe discredited themselves in the Balkans. Russia and China are hesitatingly roving the path separating the aggressive empire from a democratic nation. The world today is not a normal case and, since the Westfalia peace, there has not been such a big gap replacing the big-power concert hall. The director of power relations is conducting without a sheet of music, the goals are confused, and the answer thought to be composed and proportionate is actually an improvisation that often ends tragically, like that Israeli gun.

The eight in Moscow will have to forget about nuclear security and finally, at least, begin creating a bomb-safe big-power crisis-management structure. It has become absolutely clear that, without such a structure, the most promising plans come to nothing; the Middle East is only one example. In the wake of the tragedy in Lebanon, if it brings any results, the suddenly decided U.S.-French-Russian rescue mission could be the model of a new model: America persuading Israel to conduct a more rational policy, Russia persuading Syria, and France persuading Iran. If it does not bring results, this will make even more urgent the task to set up a big-power orchestra, because they can neither deal with nor localize the 159 crises in other ways.

And it is definitely impossible to tolerate this. It has become clear that, so far, the average mortal has not benefited at all from the opening of the road leading to a better world after 1989. It has become clear that not "only" positive opportunities can be squandered, but uncontrolled negative processes can also emerge. All the nuclear bombs can be in more secure places in vain if we lack a bomb-safe framework for limiting the many smaller or bigger conflicts. The nuclear technology, the relatively-controlled chain reaction—the world political "technique"—are not yet on such a developed level. There are daily chain reactions of violence.

No matter how complex it is to develop a new big-power world order, it is dramatically obvious that this must start without delay. If the Moscow summit decides to do this, it will also be easier to keep an eye on the nuclear devices. If not, there will be no really nuclear-safe Chernobyl-type sarcophagus or bunker for a long time.

Hungary: Kovacs Defends Rights of Hungarians in Slavonia

LD2304150096 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1000 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Foreign Minister Laszlo Kovacs has urged the settlement of the difficult situation of ethnic Hungarians living in [eastern] slavonia. The foreign minister is currently holding talks in Eszek [Osijek]. Evelyn Forro reports:

[Forro] According to the Hungarian foreign minister, the Yugoslav region's stability is inconceivable without a peaceful reintegration of eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and Szeremseg [western Srem region]. The lack of this would unfavorably affect the entire settlement process. Laszlo Kovacs said this at his talks with Ivica Vrkic, head of the interim Croatian government office; Branimir Glavas, governor of Osijek-Baranja; and (Vlado Osust), governor of Vukovar-Srem.

The Hungarian foreign minister asked that the region's ethnic composition that existed before 1991 be reestablished in the course of its peaceful reintegration.

More than 10,000 Hungarians were forced to leave their homes because of the war. Some of them live in Hungary, the rest of them live in Croatia and in Western European countries. They should be able to return as citizens with full rights.

Laszlo Kovacs told Hungarian radio that he asked his negotiating partners to help the two ethnic Hungarian representatives elected to the interim authority and the interim government office in assessing the living conditions of those remaining on the occupied territories and opportunities for those who intend to return.

During his talks with the governor of Osijek-Baranja County, the Hungarian foreign minister particularly urged the establishment of a Hungarian educational center in Eszek, because this is vital in the preservation of their national identity. [passage omitted]

Hungary: Finance Minister Views Economic Policy

AU2304123696 Budapest NEPSZABADSAG in Hungarian 20 Apr 96 pp 1, 10

[Interview with Hungarian Finance Minister Peter Medgyessy by Katalin Bossanyi; place and date not given: "Medgyessy: I Cannot Avoid Conflicts"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Passage omitted] [Bossanyi] You could get into the Guinness Book of Records because, according to the public opinion polls, you are fourth on the popularity list. In many places, finance ministers are not included on these lists, saying that they cannot be popular anyway.

[Medgyessy] I do not overvalue this high placing. The good start is partly due to the good foundation—namely, the results achieved by stabilization so far—and that many people agree with the goals I have formulated. I know that, in the course of implementing these, I am bound to clash with various lobbies, which leads to unavoidable conflicts, and, therefore, I will drop lower on the lists later. However, I do not believe that one definitely has to become unpopular to be successful. My long-term popularity depends on the consistency and success of the economic policy, and on how clearly I can put my goals across to society. For this reason, I mainly speak about having to reduce inflation because this is the basis of economic growth and improved living standards. Everyone understands this.

[Bossanyi] However, experts criticize you for not having said, since you took office, how you wish to implement all these. Others ask if we will have a Medgyessy package.

[Medgyessy] We will not, because this method is typically meant for crisis management. Lajos Bokros acted accordingly, with the best of his knowledge, and bringing visible results. My task cannot be solved in a coup-like manner.

The castle cannot be taken in one attack, instead, we must gradually implement the reforms that have been maturing for a long time and without which no lasting growth can exist. One of these is the anti-inflation policy. This is a change in the economic policy strategy: I give equal priority to significantly reducing inflation and to maintaining the balance. This already includes the "how." I am convinced that all governmental decisions have to carry the message that we wish to and can reduce inflation. But this is a many-year program.

[Bossanyi] The government has now accepted some measures that will reduce inflation somewhat already this year. Are you satisfied with the decision or did you want a more radical breakthrough?

[Medgyessy] Short-term measures are also important, but the change in attitude is far more important. It was a breakthrough that we managed to accept that, contrary to the government's soft attitude up to now, the state also has to demonstrate a self-restricting attitude.

[Bossanyi] The anti-inflation package contains the beginning of dismantling the supplementary customs duty this year but, contrary to the leaked information, you have not changed the pace of devaluation. Why?

[Medgyessy] I did not support the supplementary customs duty in the past, either: It is very easy to introduce it and get a quick income, but it is much more difficult to get rid of it. This is one of the reasons why we have considered starting the gradual dismantling already this year, which means a 9 billion forints loss of income for the budget. At the same time, the gradualness has a positive effect on inflation and it does not upset the improving export-import balance. The level of the monthly devaluation could obviously have been reduced significantly without dismantling the supplementary customs duty. This is one of the reasons I consider the Central Bank council's decision a big achievement, according to which the monthly devaluation is a maximum of 1.2 percent. If the current account and trade balance figures are favorable in the coming months, then I would be very much in favor of further reduction of the devaluation.

[Bossanyi] What about the interest-rate policy? As a bank chairman, you urged the Hungarian National Bank [MNB] for more courageous interest rate cuts....

[Medgyessy] Since last fall, all important interest rates have decreased, which clearly indicates to society that inflation will also decrease. At the same time, it would be dangerous to quickly reduce the interest rates even more. Therefore, together with the MNB, we are thinking in terms of a policy of following; namely, as inflation goes down, interest rates will also adjust to it. [passage omitted]

[Bossanyi] At the moment, what is pressuring inflation upwards: the government's overspending or wages competing with prices?

[Medgyessy] Both. However, I cannot see a great inflationary danger in the central budget this year. Still, the various professional and interest representation groups have noticeably started to soften up the budget: We should give more money for expenses and wages, which is unacceptable. This would only reproduce the problems that we have already overcome. No one wants another restrictive package. [passage omitted]

[Bossanyi] According to forecasts by economic researchers, the state budget deficit will exceed 4 percent of GDP this year, which they say will result from the additional deficit of social insurance and the reduction of the social burdens of preparing for the reforms. Is this acceptable?

[Medgyessy] It is not. Not because of the IMF agreement, but because we will not then be able to push inflation down, either. However, the deficit will not be higher than the planned 4 percent. The deficit of social insurance can probably be higher than what was accepted by parliament, but not high enough to upset the whole state administration. I note that we are jointly drawing up a program to collect the outstanding social insurance debts. And we will not give in to any "softening" attempts.

[Bossanyi] The preparation of the reform concept of state administration is delayed. When you were appointed to your position, did you know how far the work had progressed?

[Medgyessy] Compared to the statements, I was surprised how close to the start they still were. Professionally thoroughly elaborated part-concepts do exist, though. What I find worrying is that the calculations are missing from the alternatives and no analyses of effects exist. We have actually done these quickly. Another problem is that the ideas are parallel, the professional arguments are not opposing each other, and society has not been prepared for the whole process. This is the real reason for the delay.

[Bossanyi] But you have to hand in the complete reform concept to the government by the end of April!

[Medgyessy] I have no such obligation. I undertook to prepare the principles of the reform program: This would contain the level of the state's role, the direction of the changes, and the pace at which we wish to proceed in changing the major provision systems.

[Bossanyi] What is your planned schedule?

[Medgyessy] We will hold a parliamentary debate day on the most important pension system in early May. This will be followed by the government's decision on raising the age limit from next year, the new calculation of service period, and other issues. We will submit the basic text to parliament in the second half of May. We plan to spend more time debating the basic structural reform steps: We will submit the draft bill in August, and parliament should make a decision by the end of the year. However, we will only introduce the major reforms—those that influence the plans of life of generations—in 1998. Society needs this amount of time to prepare and change. We also must establish the institutions needed to operate the new pension system, including the investment funds that will work on a private basis with strict rules.

[Bossanyi] Do you think politicians will be willing to make such a difficult and unpopular decision in an election year?

[Medgyessy] It is a mistake to approach reform in such a defensive way. For politicians, what can be dangerous is if they do not tell people that the current pension system will collapse unless it is changed. At the moment, the proportion of earners and dependents is very bad, and the citizens can easily understand the consequences of this. [passage omitted]

[Bossanyi] When you were appointed minister, you emphasized that the major reform steps would have to be launched next year because the 1997 budget cannot be put together without this. Now you appear to be calculating with more gradual reforms.

[Medgyessy] I had to revise my stance. The changes in the education, health, and pension systems, which represent the important reforms, do not reduce the budget burden in the short term. However, this can be accepted precisely in the interest of the possible long-term social and economic advantages. We are working on the draft 1997 budget, but it is too early to talk about the key numbers.

[Bossanyi] You promised that the tax and levy burdens would be reduced next year. Can this be implemented?

[Medgyessy] It can. All calculations prove that this year's changes in personal taxation do not increase the tax revenue, instead they spur on the black economy. The same applies to the wage-related levies. Therefore, we need a perceptible and significant reduction. I cannot yet say what level this will be, but we will publish the alternatives as soon as we are ready with the calculations.

[Bossanyi] How much pressure is put on you regarding the use of the additional privatization incomes? You also have to decide on this by the end of April.

[Medgyessy] I have whatever I have: We have agreed that we can share a maximum of 23 billion forints. Various goals can be given priority. My order is: export development, the development of small- and medium-sized companies, promoting the reforms, and, finally, the development of the infrastructure. [passage omitted]

B-H: Izetbegovic, Granic Discuss Federation Problems

AU2304175796 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1700 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The intense day of diplomatic activities was particularly marked today by Croatian Deputy Prime Minister Mate Granic's visit. He arrived in Sarajevo as Croatian President Franjo Tudjman's special envoy.

The talks between President Izetbegovic and Mate Granic covered a range of issues relevant to the relations between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, particularly concerning the removal of obstacles standing in the way of the implementation of the federation project in line with the Dayton agreement and the Washington agreement.

Both sides expressed their willingness for further cooperation based on equality and mutual respect, as well as readiness to solve open issues and misunderstandings.

They agreed that the problem of the four towns—Bugojno, Stolac, Capljina, and Vares—should be resolved at the coming meeting in Bonn, and that the arbiter's views should be the basis for the solution to the issue of Bugojno and Vares.

Both sides believe that the Rome meeting on Mostar produced results that enable the furthering of the process of normalization and a gradual building of trust. Croatia has taken it upon itself to ensure that the agreement will be implemented in full.

B-H: Granic Promises Croatia's 'Firm Support' for Federation

AU2304183196 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1700 GMT 23 Apr 96

[Report by Dubravka Franjic on the news conference by Croatian Foreign Minister Mate Granic in Sarajevo on 23 April—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Franjic] President Franjo Tudjman's special envoy Mate Granic had a meeting with President Alija Izetbegovic of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Presidency, Federation President Kresimir Zubak, Federation Vice President Ejup Ganic, [Republic] Foreign Minister Jadranko Prlic, and Carl Bildt's deputy Michael Steiner.

Following these meetings, the foreign minister said:

[Granic] [Words indistinct] of revival is the support to the overall peace process, to the Dayton peace process, the strengthening of the federation, the strengthening of the relations between the Republic of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovia and the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the support to the solution to some open issues.

The talks with President Izetbegovic were open, friendly, and constructive. I conveyed the wishes from President Tudjman for his good health. Some very concrete things have been agreed upon, which means that the next, second, meeting of the Forum for cooperation will take place in the Republic of Croatia in early May. We agreed to give firm support to the Dayton, Washington, and Rome agreements. We will also give our full support so that the elections in Mostar can take place in May, as decided by the EU and envisaged by the Rome agreement. We discussed the mechanisms to solve some open issues, particularly the police force, the defense law, the appointment of the mayors for Bugojno and Vares, and we agreed that the arbitration should be respected. Talks on that will most certainly be held in Bonn.

We believe that an agreement on trade—a temporary agreement for one year—will be signed in May on the use of the port of Ploce. During that period we believe that we will reach a final agreement.

My general assessment of the talks so far is that this visit came at the right time, and I believe that the common wish is to promote and speed up all the said processes, which should be mutually advantageous for the Bosniaks, the Croats, the federation, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the Republic of Croatia.

[Franjic] This afternoon Mr. Granic will hold talks with Hasan Muratovic, prime minister of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Cardinal Vinko Puljic.

B-H: Muratovic Believes World Bank Experts 'Going Too Far'

AU2304142296 Hanau NOVA BOSNA in Serbo-Croatian 23 Apr 96 p 4

[Article by O.D.: "World Bank Experts 'Sticking Their Noses' Everywhere"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Sarajevo, 22 April—In an interview for Television Bosnia-Herzegovina yesterday, Hasan Muratovic, prime minister of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina Government, said that the World Bank experts "are going too far in their involvement with our organization."

"The World Bank is supposed to lend money to a country, and this country should take care of the money afterward. With the help of some of our people, they started getting involved with the way in which this money will be spent," Prime Minister Muratovic said.

Summing up the results of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina Government's work over the last two months, Prime Minister Muratovic emphasized that he was satisfied with the results achieved.

"I am happy with two realms—in the realm where we are trying to find money to begin the economic reconstruction and in employment. I am also satisfied with our plans and the already secured portion of the funds to satisfy the elementary requirements, primarily in health care, education, social care, and to a degree, probably also in the care for demobilized soldiers," Prime Minister Muratovic said.

B-H: Muratovic Opens Tuzla Trade Fair

*AU2304162896 Paris AFP in English
1600 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[Report by Dunja Tadic]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina, April 23 (AFP)—Bosnia's first post-war international trade fair opened in this northern Bosnian town Tuesday [23 April], with delegates from more than 400 European and U.S. companies bringing a vital boost for the war-shattered economy.

The event, which will run from Tuesday to Saturday, will include seminars, host hundreds of business meetings, and hear an address by Rory O'Sullivan, director of the World Bank mission in Bosnia, organisers said. [passage omitted]

Bosnian Prime Minister Hasan Muratovic cut the ribbon to open the fair, which he said would both encourage Bosnian entrepreneurs to restart businesses shut down in the war and foreign businesses to engage in trade.

"Everything to do with economic reconstruction and restarting production is very significant for Bosnia-Herzegovina," he said.

With foreign-registered cars crowding the streets of Tuzla, the third largest Bosnian industrial centre, for the first time in years, the fair itself is hoped to provide a boost to the regional as well as national economy.

Tuzla Mayor Selim Beslagic noted that 60 exhibitors had come to a trade fair organised in and "today we had more than 400." [sentence as received]

"We expect lots of contracts top be signed...we are opening the door to provate initiative," he said.

Exhibitors came to the fair from Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Denmark, Hungary, Italy, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States, organisers said.

Finance Minister Mirsad Kikanovic told AFP the gathering "confirms the war is over here and that no one expects it to start again." [passage omitted]

"There are some fairly big companies exhibiting. They are selling what they can do and it's pretty impressive," he said.

Through the week, people attending the fair will be entertained by theatre events, concerts, and pop and rock shows, an organiser said.

Jasko Osmanovic, a Tuzla resident viewing the fair told AFP he was delighted by the event. "I feel like I'm in Germany or anywhere else in Europe. So many people from all over the world. I am so happy, now I know that war is over," he said. [passage omitted]

B-H: Zubak Claims To Represent 'Entire Croat People'

*AU2304124696 Hanau NOVA BOSNA
in Serbo-Croatian 23 Apr 96 p 4*

[ONASA report: "Zubak Would Like To Represent All Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Sarajevo, 22 Apr—Kresimir Zubak, president of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, said that he, "according to the Constitution of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, represents the entire Croat people."

"As the situation is now, representatives of the HDZ [Croatian Democratic Community] dominate in the Assembly. Such are the electoral results, but also participating in this are representatives of the Croatian Peasant Party (HSS) and the Croatian Party of Right (HSP). Therefore, whether one agrees with it or not, I am the representative of the Croat people. The Croat deputy club has nominated me for that position. I am not the president of Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina. I have never arrogated that for myself," Zubak said.

According to him, party representatives asked him to visit parts of the Federation under control of the Croatian Defense Council (HVO), so that there would also be other parties there, apart from the HDZ.

"I think that there are no problems there. The problem is, however, that members and followers of these parties have changed. It is difficult to find people who would now revive the Social Democratic Party (SDP) or some other parties. People have identified with the HDZ," Zubak said.

B-H: Kapetanovic Says People 'Stalling' Federation Progress

AU2304132996 Hanau NOVA BOSNA in Serbo-Croatian 23 Apr 96 p 5

[Report by ONASA: "Prime Minister's Fear of Becoming a 'Scapegoat'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Sarajevo, 22 April (ONASA)—Izudin Kapetanovic, Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation Government prime minister, said that the law on defense of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation has been defined.

"There are still some controversial issues on which the representatives of the two peoples should give their opinion. The problem here is that they are trying to shift 'the hot chestnut' to the hands of the Federal Government, so that the government can be a sort of future culprit for everything that was not done," Kapetanovic said. According to him, there are definitely people who are stalling the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation and always finding excuses.

"If this situation lasts, I will speak up openly and point out who, in my opinion, is affecting the further progress of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation; however, I am afraid that I may become somebody's scapegoat," Kapetanovic said.

B-H: Stolac Presidency, SDA Protest OSCE Plan

AU2404110296 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1000 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Presidency of the Stolac municipality and the Executive Committee of Stolac's Party of Democratic Action protest against the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's already publicized electoral regulations. For Point 3 of the regulations, which gives the opportunity to displaced people who express the wish to remain on the territory where they are at the moment to vote just as the locals do, thereby gives legality to the state of ethnic cleansing, genocide, and apartheid, just as it renders more certain the realization of the moves toward creating Greater Serbia and Greater Croatia.

B-H: Stolac Muslims' Rights Said 'Severely Threatened'

LD2104175696 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1739 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, April 21 (TANJUG)—Member of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Bosnia-Herzegovina Srdjan Dizdarevic told the Muslim Sarajevo Radio on Sunday that the human rights of the remaining Muslims in the Croat-controlled town of Stolac in southern Bosnia were severely threatened.

Dizdarevic said that a thorough ethnic cleansing had been conducted there and that only about 20 members of the Muslim community of 8,000 which had lived in the town before the war were still there.

He said that Croat authorities were preventing Muslims from returning to their homes.

Dizdarevic, who had spent two days in Stolac, said he had seen for himself that Croats had totally demolished all of the 11 mosques in the town, including the one built in 1519, which was considered to be the oldest mosque in Bosnia.

The Sarajevo Radio reporter said that Stolac was one of the four towns where local bodies had not yet been set up, as provided under the constitution of the Muslim-Croat Federation. As a result, the international community has announced that economic assistance may be withheld in the future.

After one year of bloody conflicts over territories, Bosnian Muslims and Croats agreed in Washington in March 1994 to form a dual federation.

However, the federation has hardly shown any serious signs of functioning and the federal partners are shifting the blame for the fact on each other.

B-H: Bihac Radio Reportedly Fears Croat Annexation of Canton

AU2404105996 Bad Vilbel VESTI in Serbo-Croatian 24 Apr 96 p 5

[Unattributed report: "Croats Are Making Preparations for Bihac's Secession"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Muslim radio in Bihac claims that Croatian Army forces "have entered the territory of the Velika Kladusa municipality in large numbers and that they are still moving toward Cazin."

The radio is warning that mobilization has begun in Croatia and the Croat Republic of Herzeg Bosnia because Zagreb's intentions are to put the Bihac region under its control and prepare the ground for its man, Fikret Abdic, at any cost.

The Muslim radio states that the members of the Party of Democratic Action, the Command of the 5th Muslim Corps, and the civilian authorities in Bihac and Cazin are meeting every day "as the Muslim population has been considerably disturbed by the course of events."

According to this source, Alija Izetbegovic, leader of the Bosnian Muslims, is categorically opposed to the

Croatian leadership's intentions to separate politically, economically, and militarily the Bihac Canton from the Muslim part of the Federation, and is expected to visit Bihac in the next few days.

B-H: EU Administrator, Mostar Mayors Agree on Priorities

AU2304200596 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 23 Apr 96

[Report by Mirsad Behram from Mostar—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Behram] The media was banned from the first meeting of EU Administrator Ricardo Perez Casado with Mayors Orucevic and Brajkovic at the EU Administration Headquarters. Following the meeting, the collocutors briefly addressed the media in front of the EU Administration building. They assessed that the objective of today's talks was for the collocutors to get mutually acquainted. Administrator Casado said:

[Casado in Spanish with consecutive Serbo-Croatian translation] I wish to say that our task is very important, (?and it will focus) on two aspects: the preparation and implementation of the elections and a problem that concerns all of us, which is economic reconstruction, that is, employment and an improvement of the living standard for all Mostar citizens.

[Behram] Eastern Mostar Mayor Safet Orucevic said:

[Orucevic] I believe since we have signed several documents in the past two years, we now have everything needed to unite the city of Mostar. Now we wish to implement it with the help of the new administrator, primarily as regards the elections. We, moreover, hope that the elections in Mostar will allow us to form a single administration. If the Federation follows all the processes developing in the area, primarily the formation of cantonal governments and the transfer of the legislature from the Federation Government to the canton, I believe that Mostar will not lag behind in the process and that conditions for normal, democratic elections will be created. I hope that the international community will help implement this as soon as possible. We must start implementing rather than negotiating.

[Behram] Western Mostar Mayor Mijo Brajkovic confirmed that today's meeting primarily focused on getting to know the new administrator, and said:

[Brajkovic] Today we agreed that two of the most important things still need to be implemented in Mostar, namely, elections—it is important to hold the elections as soon as possible, since it would not be good for the Dayton agreement to fail precisely here in Mostar—and the economy. We must start doing some work here; nothing can be accomplished without an economy. Therefore, many things still need to be implemented here. The economy is particularly important; young people are unemployed.

[Behram] General Walker, commander of the Implementation Force's ground forces is due to arrive at EU Headquarters at 1600 [1400 GMT]. He will also meet with Casado, after which they will hold a news conference and inform the public about the meeting's topics.

B-H: HDZ Boycotts Federation Body Meeting in Brcko Area

AU2304202296 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1700 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] After almost two years of inactivity, the municipal council of Brcko started functioning again with a session held today. Although invited, the representatives of the Croat people from the region did not attend the session. Despite this, the Bosniak parties do expect their colleagues from the Croatian Democratic Community to participate in the future in the municipal assembly activities.

Admir Kadric reports:

[Begin Kadric recording] Deputies from the Party of Democratic Action [SDA], the Social Democratic Party [SDP], the Liberal Party [LS], and the Muslim Bosniak Organization [MBO] confirmed this as fact, when they announced at the beginning of the session that the deputy chairman of the municipal council would be determined by the presidency, which consists of one member each from the four parliamentary parties that make up the council, since the chairmanship belonged to a deputy from the ranks of the Croat people. [sentence as heard] As they said, in such a situation, the first among equals would be the representative of the Brcko SDP.

Following this item on the agenda, municipality head Munib Jusufovic reported on the activities related to the arbitration on Brcko, and the reconstruction of the war damaged facilities and homes particularly in the separation zone. In that context, Jusufovic stressed that new winds were blowing which could be seen from the surprisingly good cooperativeness of the Serb side's representatives, who reiterated their wish to cooperate unconditionally at the meeting last week with the Bosniak-Croat federation's representatives at the local level in the presence of the Implementation Force.

At the end of the session, the members of the Brcko municipal assembly heard the report by Major Mensur Djakic, commander of the 215th Chivalrous Motorized Brigade of Brcko, on the D+120 deadline that had been met in full, and police chief Mirsad Hasenic on the security situation in the municipality, which—as he said—was stable so far. However, if nothing is done the situation might become more complex. The reason for this is the return of a great number of refugees from abroad to this region, and the attempts by local returnees to remove refugees from their homes due to the lack of accommodation facilities. That is why the municipal council and the police chief made an emergency decision that such behavior was unacceptable, and that—until the Brcko municipality is solved through arbitration—the situation established by the decision on the end to the imminent danger of war was still in force so that no one had the right to remove refugees from any accommodation facilities. Detailed instructions to this effect have been issued to the Brcko police station. [end recording]

B-H: Croat Dissatisfaction With Federation Viewed

AU2104185196 Zagreb HRVATSKI OBZOR in Serbo-Croatian 15 Apr 96 pp 32-33

[Article by Jozo Curic: "A State Feeling"]

[FBIS Translated Text] There is a political topic in Bosnia-Herzegovina that hardly ever surfaces in the media and is very rarely or never discussed in Croatia. It is a statement full of dissatisfaction that the Bosnian Croats repeat on a daily basis: "We have been sold, we have lost the most in this war, and people are moving away!" Such a nihilistic view is generated first of all by the actual number of Croatian victims. Second, the implementation of the Federation is progressing only in regions under HVO [Croatian Defense Council] control.

Despite the efforts of the international community, who shaped the future Bosnia-Herzegovina while neglecting the interests of the nations included in the agreement, Federation territory really consists of regions controlled by the SDA [Party of Democratic Action] and the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army and regions controlled by Croats. One can say that the Croats are more flexible to the wishes and pressures of the international community. They follow the arrangements and try to fulfill the agreements. The Muslim partners are often absent from sessions, they are never around, they preach their idea of Bosnia-Herzegovina, they accuse the Croats for their own failures, and they control almost all of the media in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In public, Carl Bildt and Alija Izetbegovic pretend to have similar views and they encourage political processes that are sometimes dubious regarding the Croats and their constitutionality. Silajdzic and Izetbegovic often mention the problem of Croatian-Muslim relations and credit themselves for the achievements of Tudjman and Boban. "The border between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina must be known," Haris Silajdzic complains about Croatia. In a Europe without borders, he is bothered by the feeling of every Bosnian Croat that Croatia is their mother, protector, and homeland. The Muslim policy of fait accompli divides Bosnia-Herzegovina and simultaneously accuses the Croats of creating a union of three autonomous little states, even after Dayton.

Intimidation of the Croatian population in Bosnia, outvoting, and the attempts to rule on the basis of outnumbering create an uneasy feeling in the Croats, who lack a media link with Croatia and thus say: "We have been sold!"

"Croats should still feel that the Federation is their state and that they can be free and equal there," the authors of the Washington agreement have been saying since March 1994. But what happened to equality in Bugojno, Mostar, and Sarajevo? Sarajevo does not guarantee equality, but rather declarations appealing to "stop the tendency of ethnic division in Bosnia-Herzegovina." The declaration of 10 April (the Contact Group in Sarajevo) claims that supporting ethnic forces would create instability.

Part of the SDA considers the integration of the Bosnian union to be the creation of their state, where the Croats will be subtenants. The partners still call different things by the same name. Regardless of different political directions in which the union of Bosnia-Herzegovina will lead its constitutional nations, history will doom any attempt by some Muslims to force the Croats into the Balkans or separate them from their homeland by means of Silajdzic's "borders" or barriers.

The Croats cannot be intimidated by traces of unitarianism in declarations. The media that support the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and deny the confederation with Croatia have not been created by the policy that promised freedom to the Bosnian Croats. The people in Bosnian villages are not likely to live through demobilization with a monthly salary of 200 German marks. Alija Izetbegovic carelessly calls them "robbers of Muslims" in interviews. How is he planning to include them in the Federation? They are likely to be disappointed with the policy that wants to separate them from Croatia and which the medieval program of ethnogenesis keeps from seeing the advantages of a confederation with Croatia. Croats cannot be "sold" in the Federation as long as there is a will for a confederation in Zagreb. No one here in Bosnia-Herzegovina doubts the power and strength of our one and only Croatia.

B-H: Enrichment of Tuzla Region Politicians

96BA0234B Sarajevo FOCUS in Serbo-Croatian 22 Feb 96 p 12

[Article by Fuad Halilovic: "Tuzla Has Become a City of Impoverished People and Rich Politicians"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The collapse of the social welfare of the population of the Tuzla-Drina Canton [TPK], especially discharged fighting men of the 2d Corps and displaced persons, is unfortunately becoming more and more certain. While the people have become more and more impoverished with every passing day of the war, but also the postwar period, the political oligarchy has become appreciably richer at all levels. But their "war profit" is still a taboo topic, and anyone who is curious is threatened with being called an "enemy of the people" or something similar and well-known. But one thing is certain: Bosnia-Herzegovina has become a country with an impoverished people and rich politicians!

"My Wife's Assets"

Recently, the mayor of Tuzla, Selim Beslagic, "sincerely" acknowledged on "Free Europe" that his wartime salary was nearly 5 to 10 German marks [DM], which is probably true. It is unclear, however, where Beslagic got the money to finance the business premises which he has "sketched out" for himself in an exclusive shopping mall to be built soon where the Passage once stood in Tuzla. Whether with money from his Slovene firm, which at the moment is only guesswork on the part of the people of Tuzla, or with the assets of his wife, who is a representative of the extremely successful private firm Kopex Sarajlic of Srebrenik? This oil company recently obtained a new location in Sicki Brod, near the thermal electric power plant, to open yet another gasoline station, which is a sign that the representative of Kopex "did her job splendidly."

But officially other opcina and canton officials are also "getting rich" solely from their salaries, but many firms are their property, just registered under another name. Only their departure from political office and the imminent Law on the Transformation of Property, that is, on privatization, will show their worth in foreign exchange. For the moment, only Vinko Curo, president of the Tuzla Liberals, and his agency Intermedij, is "being weighed."

The Tuzla rumor mill, thanks to SLUZBENI LIST BiH [Official Gazette of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina], is preoccupied these days with the "superexclusive" enterprise Strada, which was previously unknown. SLUZBENI LIST, at the moment the newspaper in greatest demand, has published registration of the limited liability company Strada, a firm for production, domestic and foreign trade, and services. The "sensation" resulted because of the names of the 41 founders, who include the governor of the TPK, certain ministers at the republic and federal level, the chief executives of certain opcinas, police chiefs, high religious officials, military commanders, by and large the elite of the SDA [Party of Democratic Action]. Strada was entered in the court register of the Superior Court in Tuzla (Decision U/I-883/93) back in '93 with an initial investment of $150, which was in conformity with regulations at that time, and the scope of this business is truly "extensive," almost universal. The public is particularly interested to learn whether Strada is a private firm and what if anything it has been doing up to now. Why has its registration been published only now, and what is Drago Juric doing in Strada? These are the questions of many curious people.

"Back in '93, Strada was established by the SDA," spokesmen of that party say, and that is quite natural, they think, because other parties also have their firms; the SDP [Social Democratic Party] has Omega-trade, the HDZ [Croatian Democratic Union] the limited liability company Soli, the UBSD [Union of Social Democrats of Bosnia-Herzegovina] is working with the soccer club Sloboda. This enterprise, however, never came alive, although Sakib Causevic, now manager of Resod-guming, was appointed managing director. Since Strada has not begun to operate, it has, for all practical purposes, been terminated; under the new regulations it would now have to be reregistered. That is all, and there are no dilemmas about that, we were told at the SDA.

Nevertheless, even after this explanation' some things are still unclear, since the very fact that Strada itself does not speak officially is quite eloquent in and of itself.

The Affair at Liprom

The affair at Liprom, a joint-stock company which grew out of the limited liability company Soli, an enterprise founded in '93 by the HDZ and the HVO [Croatian Defense Council], is yet another occasion for the poor to invest less and trust in the politicians getting rich in the name of the people.' The managing director of Liprom, Jozo Piljic, and Mato Marinovic said in a press conference on behalf of the board of directors that Liprom has been completely plundered in just the last three months by five of its shareholders: Ante Zvonar (until recently president of the Tuzla HDZ), Tomislav Mrsic, Mate Matuzovic, Mirko Vajand (Croatian consul in Bosnia-Herzegovina), and Drago Juric. According to what was said in that conference, they became majority owners by illegal means, to the detriment of the other

11 founders. Then they removed Managing Director Piljic and replaced him with Drago Juric, who quickly "emptied the warehouses of Liprom, sold off equipment and two gasoline stations," and now, according to Piljic's allegations, Juric is advertising his own private firm DAMM as the former Liprom. Some of Juric's actions have been "acceded to" by the Superior Court in Tuzla, but the Supreme Court of Bosnia-Herzegovina has vacated those decisions, so that Jozo Piljic has been reinstated as managing director, but the firm has lost several hundred thousands marks.

The Chances and Mischances of Dr. Atic

Liprom is, of course, not the only enterprise which has suffered a loss. Serious charges were recently made against Dr. Enes Atic, acting managing director of the Tuzla Coal Mine, who is also an assistant professor in the School of Mining Geology in Tuzla. Dr. Atic is said to have transferred money from the mine to the school in return for masters' and doctoral degrees, and then, as the chief mentor in the university school, he "earned" DM15,000 to DM16,000 for each scientific degree awarded. The postgraduate student who is exposing the entire case says that a contract was concluded between the coal mine and the school of the university for preparing projects which mostly had to do with obtaining scientific degrees in the amount of DM450,000, of which DM211,000 were realized. In the meantime, Dr. Atic has submitted his resignation from the post of acting managing director of the coal mine.

Official authorities are still silent, discharged fighting men for the present are keeping their resentment to themselves, displaced persons are taking to the streets, and the politicians and managing directors are boasting in public that their wartime pay was DM5 to DM10. That should make them the greatest patriots, because it means that they were working for nothing. Is that so?

[Box, p 12]

Founders of Strada

The founders of Strada, Enterprise for Production, Domestic and Foreign Trade, and Services, are the following: Sakib Causevic, Enver Halilovic, Zekerijah Saltovic, Seid Zulic, Izudin Kapetanovic, Nadja Comic-Arnautovic, Mirsad Kikanovic, Teufik Tulumovic, Kasim Muminhodzic, Faruk Prcic, Husein Susic, Suad Buljugic, Sadik Latifagic, Izudin Imamovic, Hasan Spahic, Besim Canic, Ibrahim Imamovic, Salem Hodzic, Ahmet Zilic, Jasmin Zlatanovic, Adil Pezerovic, Nijaz Suljkic, Sadudin Hodzic, Mehmed Bajric, Vehbija Fazlic, Nusret Salkic, Himzo Hasic, Mahmut Hajric, Resad Kicic, Mustafa Semedin (all from Tuzla), Izet Hadzic from Kalesija, Esad Subasic from Tuzla, Edib Kravic from Tuzla, Salko Gotovusic from Tuzla, Rifat Campara from Tuzla, Dzevad Tosunbegovic from Kalesija, Hazim Vikalo from Gracanica, Fadil Hadzibeganovic from Tuzla, Faruk Klebic from Tuzla, Nusret Hadziibrisevic from Tuzla, and Drago Juric from Tuzla.

B-H: Liberal Party Examines Current Political Issues

LD2204174296 Sarajevo Radio Hajat in Serbo-Croatian 1600 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] General developments in evidence in Bosnia-Herzegovina last week, special federal assemblies, and the economic aspects of relations in the [Croat-Muslim] federation were some of the topics raised at the regular press conference of the [Bosnian] Liberal Party today. Muamera Popara reports:

[Popara] The Liberal Party held its regular news conference in Sarajevo today. Party President Rasim Kadic and general secretary Hasib Salkic spoke to journalists.

The tendency to divide Bosnia-Herzegovina has not been halted and we think that it is gaining ground daily. This fact is being borne out by a number of developments that indicate that the principle of national division has almost gained legitimacy in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Only the arrest of war crimes suspects can change the political situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the U.S. commitment to arrest Karadzic and Mladic is, as far as we are concerned, a crucial development, Kadic said.

Regarding the federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, he said that not a single one of its vital segments is functioning. In the Liberal Party view, the federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina is now half way between its implementation, on one hand, and national divisions on the other.

According to General Secretary Hasib Salkic, the current situation in the federation can be described as dictated economic chaos [dirigirani ekonomski kaos] which, together with the political situation, should prove that the federation has no future. On the election rules to be announced shortly, Salkic said these are awaited with great anticipation since, according to the Liberals, they will be crucial for changes in the political situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. He added, however, that he fears the election rules will only serve to legitimize the status quo. If this happens, we will consider the Dayton agreement dead, Salkic said at today's news conference.

B-H: Steiner Views Implementation of Sarajevo Agreement

AU2304185596 Split SLOBODNA DALMACIJA in Serbo-Croatian 20 Apr 96 p 11

[Interview with Michael Steiner, deputy EU high commissioner in charge of civilian matters, by Zdravko Soldic; place and date not given: "We Have To Jump Over the Line"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Michael Steiner, first deputy of the high commissioner in charge of civilian matters of the Dayton agreement, is a qualified arbiter of relations between the federal partners. Since 1991 he has been engaged in the crisis in the former Yugoslavia. He was one of the initiators of the Contact Group, of which he was a member before he entered office as the EU high commissioner's in December 1995. Steiner has become the central person for the realization of the Federation project.

[Soldic] Mr. Steiner, are you satisfied with the present implementation of the Sarajevo agreement?

[Steiner] I am not satisfied with it. There were important positive changes during the first days after the agreement was signed, but the Assembly failed to accomplish their part of the work. The issue of the flag and the coat of arms has become complicated again. Another great problem is the constitution of temporary municipal councils in the municipalities of Bugojno, Stolac, Vares, and Capljina. If administrative bodies are not elected in those municipalities, the federal partners must be ready to face the consequences mentioned in Article 11 of the Agreement on the Federation. That really means that the persons responsible for the failures in implementation of decisions should leave their positions. Moreover, the international community is not willing to spend money in the areas where obstacles to the implementation of the agreement have not been removed.

[Soldic] The day after the agreement you have initiated was signed, the federal partners had already come up with different interpretations of certain issues.

[Steiner] First, we have to be aware that several weeks before the agreement was signed were very bad for the state of the Federation. The federal partners did not fulfill the assignments decided upon in Rome, so we had to make some changes in order to avoid new hostilities. I also paid a visit to President Tudman in Zagreb and asked him to try to influence the attitudes of the federal partners. After that, we managed to work out the Sarajevo agreement, and I sincerely hope that it changes the overall situation. President Zubak and Vice President Ganic share the opinion that the agreement is very good and it establishes order in the Federation. Some people are making very nervous comments on the agreement, but we should not worry about that; the important thing is that the application of the agreement has begun.

Major Hindrances

[Soldic] The first problem the agreement has revealed are different interpretations as to who is in charge of the Agency for Investigation and Documentation [AID].

[Steiner] As to the AID, they are allowed to perform only those activities that are, according to the Constitution, within the competency of the government. If the Agency takes over tasks that go beyond the authority of the government, it is only logical that they should leave those to the Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs.

[Soldic] The agreement does not mention one of the most important issues—the return of refugees and displaced persons. Why?

[Steiner] All the arrangements signed so far on the return of the refugees and displaced persons are valid. We have to work on them, and that problem is going to be one of the central issues in our next arrangement.

[Soldic] Who do you think the major hindrances are in the realization of the Federation?

[Steiner] Now we have reached the point when the partners have to virtually jump into the Federation. I feel they are a little afraid to cross a line from which there will be no return. There is this fear of the final cut, and I think they could use some help in that situation. I think that the local population, Muslims as well as Croats, are fed up with political games, and want a political system that would work.

[Soldic] Were there any requests, perhaps even in Rome, for Bosnia-Herzegovina to be divided into three ethnic entities, or for the Federation to be organized into two national territories?

[Steiner] No, such an idea was not presented during the negotiations, because every responsible politician knows they must not make a suggestion like that. That is not realistic; the territory of the Federation cannot be divided in two. What would happen to central Bosnia? How many Croats would be left out of their alleged mother territory, and how many Bosnian Muslims, too? We are familiar with the fact that some Croats are afraid of being outvoted, but the solution for them is not in small territorial units, but in the realization of the Federation. Any other solution will not be good enough.

Elections and Media

[Soldic] The Sarajevo agreement provides sanctions for federal officials who do not fulfill their assignments.

Who is to judge whether, for instance, a president or a vice president have fulfilled their duty?

[Steiner] I feel that the problem is not in the leadership or the inhabitants of the Federation, although some people do not share my opinion. I am sure that President Zubak and Vice President Ganic, as well as the common people there, want the Federation. I think that local officials are the problem, and that the people should control them now to see whether they are doing their duty. The federal president and vice president have to dismiss the officials who are not doing their job on the local level, as well as those ministers who are not fulfilling their tasks.

[Soldic] What will your office do to ensure equal media coverage of all the political parties in the upcoming electional campaign?

[Steiner] That is a very important matter. You know that the OSCE is in charge of the elections in Bosnia-Herzegovina. We are cooperating with them in those issues. Equal access to the media—primarily the electronic media—is the first demand. The OSCE will determine the rules for that, but that will not be sufficient. All the media have to give all the political parties a chance to display their programs. There will be many spectators in the electoral campaign, and we already have in our office the people who observe the media.

B-H: Iranian Foreign Minister Says Aid Offered 'Bilaterally'

AU2204113296 Sarajevo LJILJAN in Serbo-Croatian 17 Apr 96 p 6

[Interview with 'Ali Akbar Velayati, foreign minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, by unidentified LJILJAN reporters in Sarajevo; date not given: "Iranian Aid for Bosnia-Herzegovina Will Be Taken Care of on a Bilateral Level"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Indirectly after the end of the meeting of the OIC [Organization of the Islamic Conference] Contact Group in Sarajevo, 'Ali Akbar Velayati, foreign minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, opened the Iranian main office for the restoration of Bosnia-Herzegovina. It will directly cooperate in aiding the Bosnia-Herzegovina Government during the restoration period. Afterward, he opened the Islamic Iranian Center in Sarajevo, and on the occasion answered a few questions from LJILJAN reporters.

[LJILJAN] Keeping in mind the meeting of the Contact Group of Islamic States that has just finished, we would like to ask you to convey your latest impressions of the visit to Sarajevo.

[Velayati] Bismillahir-rahmanir-rahim! [In the name of God, the compassionate and the merciful] We have had a very strenuous and full program during our two-day stay in Sarajevo. We have participated at the conference of Islamic states, and we have had meetings with the official bodies of authority of Bosnia-Herzegovina. We are glad that we have met with President Alija Izetbegovic after his illness, and have assured ourselves that his state of health, thank God, is very good. We spoke to President Izetbegovic for about an hour, and examined issues regarding our relations. We met with [Bosnia-Herzegovina Republic] Prime Minister Hasan Muratovic, [Bosnia-Herzegovina Republic] Foreign Minister Jadranko Prlic, and with Ejup Ganic [Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation Vice President]. We also signed a memorandum approving the opening of the main office for the restoration of Bosnia-Herzegovina, in which Iran will participate.

[LJILJAN] What is the real focal point of the Declaration of the Islamic States that has just been signed in regard to aid to Bosnia-Herzegovina during the process of economic reconstruction?

[Velayati] The Islamic states have committed themselves to giving aid to Bosnia-Herzegovina. Iran has stated that it will give $50 million for the restoration of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Other countries, especially Malaysia, have also committed themselves to giving aid, and say that they will report on the final amount and results at the Donator's conference in Brussels. The Islamic states will be the forerunner and an example in offering aid to Bosnia-Herzegovina and will in this way also encourage other countries to give their donations.

[LJILJAN] Iran continues to be an example to other Islamic states in the quantity and quality of aid to Bosnia-Herzegovina?

[Velayati] That is so. Ever since the crisis in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iran has endeavored to be the first to offer aid to its [the Bosnia-Herzegovina] people. And in these four years, all the meetings of the Islamic states have mainly been organized at the request of Iran.

[LJILJAN] It always seemed that some Islamic states, which could have helped more, have helped least. Was this so again this time, or did they try to "uphold their honor" in Sarajevo?

[Velayati] We do not talk about other states, we talk only of Iran. Iran endeavors to urge other countries to give aid, but the Islamic world strives to help as much as it can. The Islamic authority is not a secular authority, and it aids Islamic countries. We are convinced that we should not be uninterested in the fate of the Muslims in the world, even if they are in the most distant places of the globe.

[LJILJAN] Can you talk of the sum that the Islamic states have promised as aid to Bosnia-Herzegovina?

[Velayati] Turkey promised an amount of $80 million, and Iran an amount of $50 million. The other countries did not openly refer to the amounts that they will give as aid to Bosnia-Herzegovina. They will refer to the amounts directly at the conference in Brussels. This is the aid for the coming year, and therefore not the total aid.

[LJILJAN] In what way will the funds come to Bosnia-Herzegovina?

[Velayati] When speaking of Iran, the question of aid will be taken care of at a bilateral level. Our aid to Bosnia-Herzegovina will not be realized through some international organizations; that is absolutely clear. We do not want that. In this way, we will avoid bureaucracy and give the resources bilaterally. Nor will this be done through the United Nations, nor will the UN coordinate the entire project. We will realize the entire aid project in cooperation with the government of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The entire OIC is also an international organization, and we met in Sarajevo within the framework of this organization.

[LJILJAN] What impression will the Sarajevo meeting leave on the Brussels donors' conference?

[Velayati] It will, of course, leave an impression. Some western states have said that they are waiting to see what the Islamic states are going to do.

[LJILJAN] Lately, there have been a lot of polemics regarding the presence of Iranian soldiers in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Did you use your presence in Sarajevo in order to have talks on this issue?

[Velayati] The Iranian and the Bosnia-Herzegovina Governments are in contact with one another. We will do nothing in Bosnia-Herzegovina that would not be in the interest of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Government and people. America is using the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina to take care of some of its internal affairs. It is clear to us all that the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina is, in fact, one of the issues used in the election campaigns that are being held in America. They are not even interested in what is happening in Bosnia-Herzegovina. We do not even pay attention to what they are saying. We are simply doing our Islamic duty, of course, in agreement and with the approval of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Government. We will carry out what we agree on. Since the time of war is over, we will adapt our conduct to the conditions of peace, restoration, and reconstruction, and also conduct ourselves in that way.

B-H: NATO Not To Reduce Troop Strength Before Mid-Sep

AU2304131796 Paris AFP in English 1250 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Brussels, April 23 (AFP)—NATO military chiefs decided Tuesday that there will be no reduction in the alliance's troop strength in Bosnia before mid-September, a senior US official said Tuesday.

The remarks by General John Shalikashvili, chairman of the US joint chiefs of staff, came at a twice-yearly meeting of NATO's Military Committee.

B-H: IFOR's Smith Blames 'Both Sides' for Refugee Clash

AU2304190696 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1700 GMT 23 Apr 96

[Report by Zinaida Adilovic on a news conference by Admiral Leighton Smith, IFOR commander in Bosnia-Herzegovina, in Sarajevo on 23 April—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Admiral Leighton Smith, commander of the Implementation Force [IFOR] for Bosnia-Herzegovina, first recalled the situation in Sarajevo 120 days ago and then described the city today after the expiry of the D+120 deadline.

Some 20 minutes ago, as I was coming back from the airport, I saw people cleaning up and rebuilding the ruins in this city. I feel that their confidence is returning and that life in this city is normalizing, Adm. Smith said, stressing that significant progress in the freedom of movement could be noticed and that the results of IFOR's mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina were noticeable on every corner.

Smith did stress, however, that IFOR's military mission was not over and that the peace forces were continuing to patrol the former front lines and monitor the withdrawal of forces and weapons to the barracks.

Most of today's news conference concerned IFOR's cooperation with other organizations and agencies in charge of the civilian implementation of the peace agreement. IFOR is closely cooperating with the UNHCR in their efforts to provide safe conditions for the return of refugees and displaced persons, and the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] in their efforts to organize free elections in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Asked by a reporter about IFOR's more active participation in solving political issues and the arrest of war criminals Karadzic and Mladic, the IFOR commander stressed that they were only working within their mandate and mission and they would not change their policy.

Speaking about the incident at Most na Otoci, General Michael Walker, commander of the ground forces, said that IFOR believed that this was an orchestrated event aimed at involving the two groups of civilians in a clash and that the responsibility lay with both sides. He said that the UNHCR had a program for the organized return of refugees and IFOR supported people's return home only within this program.

One of the questions at the news conference was whether there would be peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina when IFOR withdraws at the end of this year. It is still too early to speak about that, Adm. Leighton Smith said.

B-H: IFOR Says Sava River Bridge To Open in May

AU1804131196 Paris AFP in English
1252 GMT 18 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sarajevo, April 18 (AFP)—A bridge over the Sava river that links Bosnia and Croatia will be opened to civilian traffic next month for the first time in more than three years, a spokesman for the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) said Thursday.

Canadian Colonel Eddy Fitch said the bridge at Bosanska Gradiska would be opened on May 1 by a Hungarian IFOR engineering unit. The bridge would replace a floating pontoon bridge used by IFOR soldiers since February and would be open to use for civilians, he said.

Since 1993, civilians wishing to cross the Sava have had to take a ferry crossing at Zupanja, downstream from Bosanska Gradiska, entailing long delays in civilian and commercial traffic between the two neighbouring countries.

Bosanska Gradiska lies on the main road between Sarajevo and the Croatian capital Zagreb, much used before the war. The road passes through the Serb-held town of Banja Luka.

On Sunday, German engineers will open a bridge at Visoko, outside Sarajevo.

The bridges, which are estimated to have a lifespan of around 20 years, are to replace bridges blown up by warring factions during the three-and-a-half year war in Bosnia.

B-H: Work on Registering Refugees, Repatriation Procedure

LD2104170596 Belgrade TANJUG in English
1655 GMT 21 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, April 21 (TANJUG)—The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Yugoslav authorities work together on registering refugees and determining the procedure for their return home and ways to cover their travel expenses, the Belgrade UNHCR office said in its first report on repatriation.

In order to inform the refugees about the situation in their hometowns, the UNHCR is collecting information in municipalities throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina and is sending reports on accomodation capacities, the political situation, the humanitarian aid available there, the situation on local roads and minefields around them, as well as other relevant issues.

So far, reports of this kind have been prepared for 16 municipalities in Bosnia. Similar ones will be prepared for places in Croatia where refugees could return.

The UNHCR office in Belgrade will issue a booklet and video films explaining the legal and practical aspects of repatriation.

Regular reports on the progress of repatriation will be made available to refugees in Yugoslavia through the UNHCR and the media.

A registration of refugees is currently under way in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. According to official information, Yugoslavia has about 700,000 refugees.

The UNHCR said in the report that the situation in view of accomodation in Bosnia was so grave that the organization was unable to provide enough facilities for refugees going back. It suggested that they should try to find shelter in the homes of their relatives and friends.

The UNHCR report urged Croatian authorities to allow the return of refugees as early as possible.

More than 3,600 Serb refugees who are currently in Yugoslavia have received permits to join their relatives in Croatia while other cases are under consideration.

Since the outbreak of Croatia's war of secession from the former Yugoslav Federation in the spring of 1991, a total of about 550,000 Serbs have fled their homes in Croatia.

B-H: UNHCR Official Discusses Refugee Repatriation

LD2304184596 Belgrade TANJUG in English
1610 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Geneva, April 23 (TANJUG)—Spokesman for U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Ron Redmond said on Tuesday that every tenth refugee or displaced person from Bosnia-Herzegovina could be repatriated without major difficulties and only in the territory controlled by their "entity".

Redmond, who was speaking at a news conference in Geneva, said that "all three sides" in Bosnia were hindering the return of refugees and displaced persons and cautioned that a new problem had emerged lately.

He said that groups of refugees and displaced persons were attempting to return to their homes without any previous organization or preparation.

He warned that such situations create tension and that IFOR troops were trying to avert conflicts which may easily break out.

The army headquarters of the Republika Srpska protested on Tuesday to NATO and IFOR against the lightly injuring of two and seriously injuring of ten Serb civilians by IFOR in the Doboj area, northern Republika Srpska.

The incident occurred on April 21 when 3,000 Muslims, led by IFOR, crossed the borderline and attempted to enter Doboj. IFOR troops intervened and wounded the Serb civilians.

Under a UNHCR plan, about 870,000 refugees and displaced persons out of the total two million should return to their homes in 1996.

It seems quite unlikely that the plan will be carried out because only 50,000 refugees have been repatriated so far.

B-H: Norway Opens Embassy in Sarajevo

AU2304164996 Paris AFP in English
1631 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sarajevo, April 23 (AFP)—Norway opened an embassy in Sarajevo Tuesday [23 April], joining more than a dozen other countries which already have diplomatic representation in Bosnia.

The facility was opened by Deputy Foreign Minister Jan Egeland and will be run by a charge d'affaires, Thor Giselsen.

The embassy will have an ex-patriate staff of four, as well as several local employees. There are no immediate plans for Oslo to send a full ambassador, Giselsen said.

B-H: Bosnian Serb Prime Minister Meets With Carl Bildt

LD2304154496 Pale Srpska Radio-Televizija First Program Serb Radio in Serbo-Croatian
1300 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In Pale today, Rajko Kasagic, prime minister of the [Bosnian] Serb Republic, received international community's special envoy, Carl Bildt. The talks focused on the possibilities of overcoming the crisis between the Serb Republic and the international community after the absence of Serb Republic representatives from the recently held Donors' conference in Brussels. Report by Dobrinka Marinkovic:

[Marinkovic] The two sides, at today's meeting between Serb Republic Prime Minister Kasagic and the international community's high representative Carl Bildt, discussed all controversial issues relating to the absence of the Serb Republic delegation at the recent Brussels Donors' conference on the reconstruction of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Bildt, just like the representatives of all the institutions who have come to the Serb Republic recently, wanted to know the reasons for the absence of our delegation from the Brussels conference, Prime Minister Kasagic said after the meeting, and added:

[Begin Kasagic recording] It was, of course, my duty to explain our reasons [for not coming]; our demands for respect of the equality of both entities; our demands that the international community shows the minimum of interest for investing certain funds in the Serb Republic.

I hope there will be no problems in the Serb Republic's cooperation with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. [end recording]

We had talks on the latest developments in the political and economic situation, Bildt said after his talks with the prime minister of the Serb Republic. I expressed my concern over the situation, especially as it seems that a part of the Serb Republic leadership excludes the Serb Republic from economic cooperation with the world. I do not think that is good for the people of the Serb Republic or for the peace process in general.

During the talks with the prime minister, Bildt added, I tried to coordinate views regarding further political steps so that the situation can be changed to the benefit of the people of the Serb Republic.

According to Serb Republic Prime Minister Kasagic, at the meeting to be held tomorrow in Sarajevo, in which international financiers will be present together with the representatives of both entities and Carl Bildt, the Serb Republic delegation will report on our republic's development program.

I think that all problems will be solved, that the Serb Republic will get adequate treatment and that there will be no sanctions, Prime Minister Kasagic concluded.

B-H: Bildt Meets Serbs' Kasagic 'To Coordinate Views'

LD2304202896 Belgrade TANJUG in English
1842 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pale, Apr 23 (TANJUG)—The high representative of the international community for Bosnia-Herzegovina Carl Bildt said he tried Tuesday in Pale (administrative center of Republika Srpska) [R.S.] to coordinate views with R.S. Prime Minister Rajko Kasagic on future political steps to change the present situation for the benefit of the R.S. people.

Bildt recalled that R.S. (Serb entity in Bosnia-Herzegovina) had been under international community sanctions until last February, and described as detrimental the decision of its political leadership not to attend the donors' conference in Brussels.

Bildt also described as unacceptable some statements of R.S. representatives which were certainly not in line with the will of the people.

On the eve of the pledging conference on Bosnia held on April 12 and 13 in Brussels, Kasagic had explained that R.S. representatives could not attend under the umbrella of the 'delegation of Bosnia-Herzegovina' as no joint Bosnian bodies [word indistinct] exist before elections, in line with the Dayton accor[illegible]

The Council of Europe will help many people living in very difficult social conditions, Bildt said, noting that political problems cannot be more important than reconstruction aid.

Resolving this situation depends on R.S., he added.

Kasagic told TANJUG last week that R.S. had not received a single dollar for reconstruction and development, whereas the Muslim-Croat Federation, which enjoys the support of United States and Germany, had received over 200 million German marks, including 65 million dollars from the European fund for social development.

B-H: Bildt Calls Pale Serb Leader Statements 'Unacceptable'

AU2304172196 Paris AFP in English
1707 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pale, Bosnia-Herzegovina, April 23 (AFP)—Hardline Bosnian Serb leaders are hurting their own people and the peace process, Carl Bildt, the top civilian official overseeing the peace process, said Tuesday [23 April].

In an apparent reference to Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and the speaker of the Serb assembly, Momcilo Krajisnik, Bildt said Serb hardliners are acting to "the detriment of their own people in the Republika Srpska and to the peace process."

Speaking after a meeting with Bosnian Serb prime minister Rajko Kasagic in the Serb "capital" Pale, Bildt said he had "underlined to the prime minister, the necessity of taking decisive political steps to change the situation to the benefit of the Republika Srpska."

He criticised the refusal of the Serbs to attend a major aid donor conference in Brussels this month because it was invited as part of a joint Bosnian delegation.

Karadzic was judged to have ordered the Serbs to boycott the major event.

"Since the Brussels conference the Republika Srpska is under sanctions from part of its political leadership," Bildt said.

"I pointed particularly to some statements made by the representatives of the presidency of the Republika Srpska which I consider unacceptable, uninformed and really to be detrimental to the interests of people here," he said.

He added that ordinary Serb "people want economic cooperation, they want help. Lots of people are unemployed, lots of people are living under very difficult social conditions."

Kasagic said he hoped for his part the international community would show at least "a minimum of interest in investing in the Republika Srpska."

"I hope there will be no problems in cooperation with the World Bank and IMF," he added.

He said Serb officials would present Wednesday Bildt's office in Sarajevo with details of their aims for the development of the Republika Srpska, one of the two entities that make up post-war Bosnia.

Officially, since the Dayton peace treaty, Karadzic is no longer president of the Serb entity. In practice, diplomats and officials acknowledge he is still in charge.

B-H: Serbs Identify IFOR Soldier Involved in Shooting

LD2304192596 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1751 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Doboj, 23 Apr (SRNA)—Slobodan Konjevic of Doboj has identified a member of the Danish battalion of the Implementation Force [IFOR] who wounded him and another Serb during the attempt by Muslims to enter Doboj last week.

A statement in connection with the incident on the outskirts of Doboj from the headquarters of the Nordic-Polish brigade continues to reject the possibility that their soldiers fired at the assembled citizens of Doboj who were preventing the attempt at a forced entry into Doboj by Muslims from Tenja.

The IFOR commander does not deny the use of firearms by his soldiers but describes this shooting as "warning fire."

The headquarters of the Nordic-Polish brigade of IFOR has strongly criticized Radio Doboj for its role in the events at Usce. IFOR complains that this Serb radio was calling on the population from early Sunday morning to go to the bridge and defend the town, stressing that there was "agitation and encouragement and rousing music."

The director of Radio Doboj today spoke on the radio to reject the account and accusations made in the statement from the IFOR command. He explained the role of his media organization, telling the members of IFOR that "there was no question of warmongering, rather it was patriotic music appropriate to the circumstances."

B-H: Serb Interior Minister Criticizes International Police

LD2304224796 Belgrade TANJUG in English 2235 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pale, April 23 (TANJUG)—Interior Minister of the (Bosnian Serb) Republika Srpska Dragan Kijac said Tuesday that international police in Bosnia had acted unprofessionally in the recent incidents when Muslims had attempted incursions into Republika Srpska territory.

Kijac was meeting with international police commissioner in Bosnia Peter Fitzgerald at the Republika Srpska's administrative centre of Pale.

Kijac said that international police had not prevented an unwanted situation from developing when the Muslims tried to storm the towns of Doboj and Novi Grad in the north and west of the Republika Srpska, respectively, a statement from the meeting said.

The two officials discussed chances for improving cooperation between the Republika Srpska police and the international police force in the implementation of the peace accord for Bosnia.

Last week, Muslims twice tried to storm Doboj and attempted also to enter Novi Grad, after they had tried to do the same in Brcko and Teslic in the north.

Kijac said on Sunday that the Muslims' attempts to make unlawful incursions into the Republika Srpska were meant to provoke incidents and then blame them on the Bosnian Serbs.

He said that the Republika Srpska Interior Ministry had long had information which pointed to the Muslim authorities' planned and premeditated actions designed to cause incidents and blame them on the Republika Srpska.

The ministry had made this known to the international police force, which did nothing, however, to prevent the Muslim attempts to storm Doboj and Novi Grad, Kijac said.

B-H: Hague Court Puts Conditions on Djukic's Release

AU2404105896 Paris AFP in English 1001 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Hague, April 24 (AFP)—The UN war crimes tribunal said Wednesday it was conditionally releasing Bosnian Serb General Djordje Djukic, held here on war crimes charges arising from Bosnia's almost four-year war.

The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia ordered Djukic, who is terminally ill with cancer, to be sent back to Belgrade.

However it said it was retaining charges against him and stipulated that his address be given, that he appear before the tribunal on demand and that it be updated regularly on his state of health.

Djukic's lawyer had on Friday called for all charges against him to be withdrawn due to his rapidly deteriorating health.

B-H: Karadzic Tipped To Run in Next B-H Elections

AU2404102796 Bad Vilbel VESTI in Serbo-Croatian 24 Apr 96 p 3

[Article by S. Djorjevic: "Karadzic To Take Part in Elections"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Radovan Karadzic, president of the Serb Republic, will again feature on the list of the ruling Serbian Democratic Party [SDS] at the coming elections to be held in the former Bosnia-Herzegovina by mid-September at the latest.

This information was procured by Stevo Radic, president of the municipal committee of SDS Zvornik, at the session of this municipality's political section, devoted to the elections.

Answering the questions of all those present, Radic stressed that the SDS Serb Republic's main committee had decided in favor of Dr. Karadzic's repeated nomination at its last session and that there would be no going back in this respect.

For the time being, the international tribunal in The Hague and the international community to Karadzic's political activity.

B-H: RS Parliament Chairman on Peace Implementation

96P20392A Moscow MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI in Russian 31 Mar 96 No 13, p 13

[Interview with Momcilo Krajisnik by Gennadiy Sysoyev; place and date not given: "Question About the Future of Bosnia Remains Open—An Opinion"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Momcilo Krajisnik, the second person from the top in the hierarchy of the Serb Republic (RS) is, with increasing frequency, referred to as Karadzic's successor and the future leader of the republic. The proponent of the hard line in the leadership of the RS, Momcilo Krajisnik presented his views about normalizing the situation in Bosnia.

[Sysoyev] Do you feel that Dayton agreements are being implemented, or is everyone just pretending that progress is being made in normalization. In general, what are the prospects for implementing Dayton peace Accord?

[Krajisnik] The military aspects of the accord have been more or less implemented. The civilian part is more complex. There are many deficiencies in the Dayton agreement. To start with, there is the problem of Sarajevo which has already created a hundred thousand new Serbian refugees. Second, the freedom of movement, declared in the accord, is rendered questionable, by the arrest of two Serbian officers. The third problem is the violation of Brcko's status and apparently the status of the entire Northern corridor which connects the two parts of the Serb Republic. Also, the problem of territorial borders has not been completely resolved; additional corrections are being entered in the maps that have already been established. We did not get the promised exit to the sea either.

Among these issues, there are two problems that stand out. The recent arrest of General Dukic has undermined even what little confidence Serbs had in international community. A few days prior to that, we had released 15 Croats and Muslims who had been arrested for inciting Serbs to move out of Sarajevo. Our demands, on the other hand, are ignored. The interaction with the international forces has complicated everything.

The other serious problem is Sarajevo. The resolution of its status that would have satisfied everyone was so close—within reach. Sarajevo was to become a separate region and remain a multinational city. Serbs only wanted to have local authority in the communities where they were in majority, and they wanted to have their own police. That was all. However, the international community decided to give Sarajevo to the Muslims. As a result, all Serbs left Sarajevo because the main issue, the issue of authority (which in essence caused the war), remained unresolved.

[Sysoyev] So, why did you agree in Dayton to surrender Sarajevo to the Muslim-Croat federation?

[Krajisnik] The previous agreement that Sarajevo would have a special status remained in force to the last moment. But for some unknown reason, the chief of the unified Serbian delegation, President Milosevic agreed to actually surrender it to the Muslims. I think it happened that way because the Yugoslav delegation was under a great pressure due to the sanctions. Personally, I consider this decision as a crime against the Serbs. Unfortunately, we will hardly be able to correct this mistake in the future.

[Sysoyev] You were in Dayton as a member of the Serbian delegation. When you became acquainted with the proposed map divisions, did you try to oppose them?

[Krajisnik] They showed us the map 40 minutes before the signing ceremony. It was a shock for me. The map absolutely did not correspond to our preliminary agreements. As you know, the delegation of Serb Republic refused to sign the map, because it did not satisfy our interests, and we could not accept such a responsibility.

[Sysoyev] However, Slobodan Milosevic was authorized to make decisions for the delegation, and the international community was satisfied to have his agreement. This right to lead the joint Yugoslav and RS delegation was given to Milosevic by your own people at the end of August last year. Why did the RS leadership agree with this?

[Krajisnik] By that time, Serbia's blockade against RS had been in effect for over a year. We were trying to eliminate disagreements, and Serbian Patriarch Pavle advised us to create a common position for Yugoslavia and Republika Srpska , and to have a unified delegation for negotiations.

It was my opinion that RS should participate in negotiations independently, but I was not able to persuade the others to accept my point of view. I do not derive any particular pleasure from the fact that I proved to have been right.

[Sysoyev] It is a general opinion that the disagreements among the top Serbian politicians were the actual reason for the downfall of the Republic of Serbian Krajina (RSK), which was taken by Croats in a few days with hardly any resistance. Why did the Serb Republic fail to intervene and help although it had such an agreement with RSK?

[Krajisnik] Yugoslavia was the guarantor for Krajina. We did, in fact, have brotherly relations with RSK and an agreement for help, but at the time of Croatian attack we were in an extremely difficult situation. On the eve of that attack, Croatia also attacked our territories, taking advantage of the NATO bombing. Our entire republic was threatened. Fighting without Yugoslavia's help was useless. It was a great mistake to leave Krajina without protection.

[Sysoyev] What is your prediction: how do you see the future of Bosnia-Herzegovina and your life together with Croats and Muslims?

[Krajisnik] Bosnia is a quasi-state; it was structured in such a way that it could not exist.

Yes, Bosnia was entered in the UN list, but it does not have its own army, it own police, its money or executive authority, and therefore it can not be considered as a country. Bosnia has no chance to survive. It will exist only as long as the external powers are willing to maintain the illusion of its existence.

This can not last very long. Bosnia will most likely be transformed into two state formations, or even in three, because the Croats will hardly be able to coexist with the Muslims.

B-H: RS's Buha, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Meet

LD2304181396 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1555 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Sarajevo, 23 Apr (SRNA)—Dr. Aleksa Buha, minister of foreign affairs of the Serb Republic [RS], held talks in Pale today with Nikolay Nikolayevich Afanasyevskiy, Russian first deputy foreign minister, on the implementation of the Dayton agreement with special emphasis on the elections.

Buha informed the guest from Russia, which is a member of the executive council of the international community for supervising the implementation of the agreement, about the unequal treatment of the RS and the Croat-Muslim federation.

"We consider that on certain points the RS and Croat-Muslim Federation are not treated equally and the majority of the problems in the implementation of the Dayton agreement arise out of that state of affairs," the RS foreign minister said.

Noting that the federation has already received $200 million from the international community, and the RS nothing, Dr. Buha stressed that "it is high time that the two entities were treated equally, because that is the guarantee of the preservation of peace in the former Bosnia-Herzegovina."

Speaking about the forthcoming elections, Minister Buha said that the RS would observe democratic rules and allow all parties that fulfill the conditions of the agreed rules to have equal treatment in the media.

Afanasyevskiy said it was essential that "the international community demonstrates an unbiased approach in its assessment of the activities of all sides in the former Bosnia-Herzegovina."

"We consider the preparations and adherence to the election deadlines set out in the peace agreement very important and this will be discussed at the meeting of the council in Sarajevo tomorrow," the first deputy [to] Yevgeniy Primakov [Russian foreign minister] said. [passage omitted]

Also present at the meeting were Vladimir Borisovich Goncharenko, head of Russia's mission in the former Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Yakov Fyodorovich Gerasimov, representative of the Russian Federation in the former Bosnia-Herzegovina.

B-H: Serbs Demand To Know Fate of 2,000 Prisoners

LD2304165396 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1420 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Banja Luka, 23 Apr (SRNA)—The Serb Republic's association of families of missing and imprisoned soldiers and civilians organized a rally in Banja Luka today, which sent a letter to international players to bring pressure to bear on the Croatian and Muslim authorities to reveal the truth about the fate of 2,000 Serb prisoners.

"Four months of peace have passed and families of the missing and imprisoned [Serbs] still do not know anything about 2,000 of their relatives captured in the final days of the war," the letter says and warns that they are still being held in Croat and Muslim prisons, despite the fact that all deadlines for their release have expired.

The letter demands that the international players change their present attitude to this issue or, it warns, the Serb people will be forced to care about the fate of their relatives in a different way.

"We will take action to hinder the implementation of everything you are doing here. We will block your bases, offices, and frustrate all activities in connection with the return ofrefugees and the elections.

"We want to know what has happened to our relatives; those imprisoned should be freed and those dead should be buried," the letter says in conclusion.

B-H: E. Slavonia Serbs Endorse Hadzic Mandate

AU2304155996 Belgrade Radio Beograd Network in Serbo-Croatian 1300 GMT 23 Apr 96

[Report by Bogdan Rkman from Vukovar]

[FBIS Translated Text] In addition to Goran Hadzic, whose presidential mandate has been endorsed as expected, Beli Manastir deputy Borivoje Zivanovic has been elected assembly chairman, while Dr. Vojislav Stanimirovic from Vukovar has been elected executive council chairman. The election of new people to the region's political leadership was preceded by the passing of special assembly declaration. The declaration has changed the name of the region from Srem [serb form for Srijem]-Baranja region to the Serb region of eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and western Srem. The declaration also defines the assembly's temporary nature; it was decided that it would remain legitimate until the next elections in the region.

In his inauguration speech, Goran Hadzic said that he firmly believes that war is no longer an option, while the new executive council chairman, Dr. Stanimirovic, announced sharp measures to prevent crime and stop people from moving out, and to accommodate refugees in the region. As the assembly has been established, there is no longer any need for the regional council, which the assembly abolished with a formal decision.

B-H: Serb TV Marks 'Success' After 'Bombardment'

LD2204220896 Pale Srpska Televizija in Serbo-Croatian 1830 GMT 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At its last session in Bijeljina, the [Bosnian] Serb Republic Radio and TV Editorial Board adopted a new program schedule for Serb TV and radio; it takes effect as soon as the new single radio and TV network, destroyed in the NATO raids in September 1995, comes in operation.

[Begin recording] [correspondent Vlado Trsic] The Serb Radio and TV Editorial Board held a meeting in Bijeljina today designed to enhance the output and technical development of Serb Radio and TV. The board adopted a new program schedule for the Banja Luka and Sarajevo studios. Topics also included the introduction of a satellite program for Europe and the United States, although most attention was devoted to the need for the two studios to link up and produce programs jointly.

[Ilija Guzina, Serb TV editor-in-chief] We can expect the linking of Pale and Banja Luka studios as early as this week—they will produce a joint news bulletin. This will be a great success for us in light of the disastrous bombardment last year. At the same time we will introduce a new program schedule. The new schedule is drawn up to take into consideration the fact that we will soon be on two satellites, one in the United States, the other above Europe, and that those targeted by our program want us to use the 1900-2200 [1700-2000 GMT] slot exclusively for programs made by us. We plan to fill the 1900-2000 slot with a whole series of short, interesting programs made in our studios. The main news bulletin will be broadcast at 2000; the 2030-2200 slot will be reserved for political, phone-in, and similar programming; at 2200 we will rebroadcast the Serbian TV 1930 news bulletin. At the same time our second channel will rebroadcast the entire program of Serbian TV.

[Trsic] What about the technical development, audience, and the strength of signal?

[Guzina] Well, you see, we are only half way there. We have been given considerable funds by the Serb Republic. Although very poor, the Serb Republic has given us 4 to 5 million German marks [DM] for the reconstruction of the Serb Radio and TV network. The reconstruction will be completed by mid-June and the network will then be as good as before the raids. The second network will not be as good because we need more investment for that.

Connected with this is our role in the election campaign. We cannot join the election campaign unless at least the first stage of the reconstruction is completed. Unfortunately, no one except the Serb Republic has tried, has asked us what we need, or has offered to help.

[Trsic] The funds for Serb Radio and TV will be used to finance its technical development and improve its personnel and editorial policy. No help has been forthcoming from anywhere, not even from IFOR [Implementation Force], which nevertheless insists on being involved in program policy and on using the frequency network. The staff has made great effort and has shown a strong desire to ensure that the new program schedule and stronger signal are in place by Monday, 29 April. [end recording]

B-H: Serb Republic To Connect to Internet 'Soon'

AU1804173096 Bad Vilbel VESTI in Serbo-Croatian 18 Apr 96 p 32

[Unattributed report: "The Serb Republic on Internet"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Serb Republic will soon connect to Internet via satellite network, SRNA reports. According to statements recently made in Banja Luka by Miroslav Rogic, director of the University Computer Center, and Radoslav Grujic, head of the Department for Scientific Research with Banja Luka University, the connection to Internet will make it possible for millions of people throughout the world to get necessary information about events in the Serb Republic. The University Computer Center in Banja Luka became a full member of Internet last year.

Croatia: Official Views Newly Appointed Serb Negotiator

AU2404143096 Split SLOBODNA DALMACIJA in Serbo-Croatian 22 Apr 96 p 3

[Report by Bojan Divjak on interview with Ivica Vrkic, head of the Government Office for the Transitional Government; place and date not given: "Responsibility Lies With the Serb Side"]

[FBIS Translated Text] At the end of last week, the frequent changes in the leadership of the quasi-authorities in the occupied territory culminated in a change that could leave a deeper mark on the peace process in Croatia—Milan Milanovic, the head of the Serb negotiating team who signed the Erdut-Zagreb Agreement, has suddenly been removed from office, and his place has been filled with Goran Hadzic, known to the Croatian public as the initiator of Serb rebellion in eastern Slavonia and onetime "president of the Republic of Serb Krajina." Although Hadzic's appointment has not been officially confirmed to UNTAES [UN Transitional Administration in Eastern Slavonia], it is more than certain that the term "negotiator" used by the local Serb media for Hadzic serves only for internal use, since there are no more negotiations as a diplomatic discipline. All that remains is the practical implementation of the results of completed negotiations, and this move is only the appointment of the representatives of the Serbs with the transitional administration. Ivica Vrkic, head of the Government's Office for Transitional Administration, has commented on the way that the political rehabilitation of Goran Hadzic could reflect on the process of peaceful reintegration:

"From Croatia's point of view, I do not think the question of who will represent the Serbs is particularly important; whether it will be Hadzic or someone else, the important thing is that the peaceful reintegration process has begun and that, within a year, the Croatian authority will be established and the refugees will be back home, Vrkic said. Who will represent the Serbs is not our problem, and they themselves have to make a decision who they will choose to represent their interests, but that representative has to work only within the framework of Security Council Resolution 1037 and those documents that are the outcome of the Erdut-Zagreb Agreement," he added.

Vrkic did not want to comment on whether Croatia will have any objections to the appointment of Goran Hadzic, having said that it was not important for the Croatian authorities who will be chosen by the Serbs. "Of course," Vrkic says, "if they choose a man who has got moral credibility on both sides, then it will be much easier for them to advocate their own interests, and if they choose a man who has got such specific political weight that it is not easy to accept him in the process of peaceful reintegration and with whom it will not be easy to work and talk constructively, then it will only be at their own expense. Everything about Goran Hadzic is known in Croatia, and I do not need to express my opinion of him," Vrkic said, "and how successful he will be depends upon the extent to which he will be in a position to represent that people in a way that he is constructive in the implementation of the peaceful reintegration—after all, those who have elected him know best who and what Goran Hadzic is."

"If I could influence the choice of the Serb representative, I would like him to be a man who did not participate in either the rebellion or the occupation, but if the Serbs think that Hadzic is their real representative, the Croatian side will talk to him. Of course, we must bear in mind that, if the Serb representative were more convincing and more autochtonous, the peaceful reintegration would be easier. This way, all responsibility for the peace process lies with the Serb side," Vrkic said.

Appraising the first reactions, which say that Hadzic has been appointed directly by the Serbian president's cabinet, Vrkic said that it is certain that any kind of authority in the occupied territory depends upon who will be the representative of Slobodan Milosevic and not upon any possible legitimate election procedures. "The Croatian side will not intervene in the choice of the Serb representative, but it will maintain the right to decide on the way that the peace process will proceed, which will primarily depend upon the behavior of that representative and their readiness to accept all the obligations resulting from the signed agreements," Vrkic said. He added that the Croatian state also maintains the right to assess how harmful or useful to the peace process it is, and to react, based upon that, in the manner it deems the best for the continuation of the peaceful reintegration.

FYROM: Gligorov Criticized for Undemocratic Tactics

AU2304192096 Skopje DELO in Macedonian 19 Apr 96 pp 12-13

[Commentary by B. Taskovski: "Political Game With Masks"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The last word is up to the Macedonian [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM] parliament now: It has to decide whether the initiative of the Macedonian citizens for a referendum on early elections will become legitimate and thus enter parliamentarian procedure or not. If we compare prior experiences from similar big political events, we can definitely expect the solution to be as protracted as possible. The goal is to sideline it and divert the focus of public opinion. Taking into consideration all internal political interests and duties that this state has toward the world concerning democratic processes, we can now expect an affluent and covert political game under the veil of hypocrisy and litany. This political masquerade, under the dictation of the ruling parties in the first place, and particularly of Mr. Kiro Gligorov, makes the whole situation intensively uncertain and probable. Normally, revolt is to be expected as well!

If we follow the pattern of the whole event, everything becomes clear: The aim was to divide the government from the opposition, as well as the bloc of the political adversaries. However, in such a situation, the people and His Highness, the voter, who has been humiliated in the most vulgar way in his own state and in the world, has suffered the most. The greatest surprise is the flagrant violation of the legal order by the acting president of the R.M. [Republic of Macedonia], who states with resignation that in the last 100 years, there have never been any such initiatives in the world, and therefore the whole initiative is under suspicion because its intention is to "make the people speak about the newly created events in the country," and he uses a few tactics in accusing the opposition of not having waited for a couple of days before the new law was adopted and thus regulated this problem! So, to make everything legal, according to their opinion, it was necessary to wait until the entire initiative was transformed from a free will of the citizens into a general signing of all those who are against this authority in the institutions of the state, and we have to admit that this is quite illogical and dangerous under the prevailing circumstances in Macedonia.

As a possible conclusion, the following question can be asked: Was the opposition so naive to believe that the old fox, Gligorov, would bite the bait and accept the possibility of early elections after the breakup of the Alliance for Macedonia? This is not a matter of a test, but of pure conjecture. This is exactly why there was great disappointment when part of the opposition swallowed the bait after it had a number of meetings with Gligorov. It is definitely known who the head of the masquerade in Macedonia is. It is he, and Gligorov has been changing masks every day during the past 50 years because he is a man who feels strongly about being on the winner's side and about ruling at any cost. There is no morale here.

Many have spoken about the complex political situation, each one of them for his own field and with his own authority, in relation to the fate of the 220,000 signatures. According to the largest number of them, and also according to a large number of political parties, the Macedonian Constitution provides for such an initiative. It is a completely different matter that the creators of the Constitution did not consider this possibility in time, and the ulterior comparisons with other world systems is nothing but a bias which leads to the violation of our Constitution. In such a complex framework of events and occurrences, this becomes a very sensitive issue, nearly a boomerang, which may return when it is least expected. This first of all refers to the authority and its rigid stance in manipulating the will of the people and in conducting experiments with the tolerance and dignity of the citizens, something that it has been doing continually for the last five years. The way things are now leads to the conclusion that the authority in the Republic of Macedonia and Mr.Kiro Gligorov do not respect the people and its will. These matters are placed on the highest level in all other normal states and democracies. This is something sacred. Everywhere else, except in Macedonia, because the "awakened" Kiro Gligorov "has read" that something similar has not happened in Europe in the last 100 years! Where was he when the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia was being created?

Poland: Oleksy Statement on Ending of Investigation

LD2304133296 Warsaw Polskie Radio First Program Network in Polish 1005 GMT 23 Apr 96

[Statement by former Polish Prime Minister Jozef Oleksy at a news conference at the headquarters of the Social Democracy of the Polish Republic, SdRP, in Warsaw—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] I am leaving. I am innocent. This is what I said when I submitted my resignation as head of the government. Today and forever again I will say the same thing. Justice has prevailed. I regard the military prosecutor's decision as the end of the most difficult period in my life.

Only my family and I know how much we have had to bear, what the price of that has been, and how much it hurt.

My name was used in public without any regard for my personal dignity. Elementary rules of decency were broken. Various hypotheses were freely circulated. I think that that period will not be well noted in the history of good democratic relations in Poland.

We all remember the bad style of Lech Walesa's departure. The atmosphere of those days must be recalled to understand well the reasons for the actions taken against me and the force of political aggression whose victim I became. In fact, the authors of the so-called Oleksy case did not conceal that they were eager to destroy the entire Left and that they were planning to do that.

I thank my party and all the supporters of the Left in Poland for standing behind me, for not doubting my innocence, and for reading correctly the political intentions in this matter.

In December 1995, in the chamber of the Sejm of the Polish Republic, I was astounded by hearing in public accusations spoken by a member of my government. This seemed almost improbable. However, unfortunately, this did happen.

I knew the truth about myself, but I did not know the truth about my opponents. I knew I was innocent. I had a strong belief in law and justice. I knew that there could be no honest evidence against me. However, at that time only I knew that truth. Today, ladies and gentlemen, you all know it, and I can look you straight in the eye.

Since yesterday, some politicians have been resorting to undermining in public the prosecutor's decision, without taking into account the fact that they consider themselves democrats and defenders of law and order. They are ignoring the signals they are sending to society by doing this. In their fervor, some of them are giving the impression, as they did a few months ago, that the only thing they are prepared to accept is a verdict by an execution squad. As in those days, when organized action was taken in the name of opposition to democratic decisions [the presidential elections], opposition politicians and some of the media are today undermining in the eyes of the public a legally binding decision of the prosecutor's office. This is a bad omen for the young Polish democracy.

I am waiting for a reaction, and I believe that individuals and circles for whom law and democracy are not a game or an opportunity for political aggression, will speak out.

In the recent hard months, Polish intellectuals have been silent, and moral authorities have been silent. The Polish scene has in a way been cleared, and too much space has been left for political games. Sometimes one had the impression that there was nobody to say what was right and what was less right, what was acceptable and what was brutal, and whether there was a limit to hatred and stubborn intensity blocking any agreement.

Thank you to the few public figures who showed personal courage and independence of opinions.

I was attacked in public, and the most severe accusations were made against me in an atmosphere of a threat to the security of the Polish state. For this reason, I will again demand the publication of the white book that contains all the materials relevant in this matter. Let Poles read in detail how the attempt was made to accuse a prime minister in the Polish Government.

Political revenge is something alien to me. I do not want revenge to be a guiding force today. The Left, which they tried to defame and humiliate, will not yield to the desire for simple revenge—I strongly believe that. I know how to push myself and my own feelings aside. I have always acted in this way in my public service. The priorities today are the affairs of the Polish state and what the Polish state should do in order to prevent similar situations from happening in the future. The Polish state must draw all conclusions from this case. The political police should never again be able to threaten democratically elected public bodies.

The weakness of the political and legal culture should be noticed as soon as it shows signs of threatening the image of Polish democracy. All of us in Poland must put an end to the shortsighted political wrangling that is still a substitute for farsighted policies. We must be able to distinguish, together and jointly, between informing the public and attempts to manipulate public opinion.

The verdict by the prosecutor's office is a source of satisfaction for citizens and democracy. The legal process has become embroiled in political emotions. Maybe the time is not too far away when politicians in their struggles will not pass judgment on truth, guilt, and what is correct, but will know how to behave with humility when confronted by the law and accept legal verdicts irrespective of whether or not these verdicts are politically convenient and whether they apply to people they like or abhor.

Esteemed ladies and gentlemen, many Poles fortunately did not yield to the mass campaign of the past few months. The hundreds of letters, telegrams, and ordinary expressions of support and encouragement in the streets and squares of Poland were a source of great satisfaction and good cheer for me. These are my priceless assets. I wish to cordially thank you all for this, my fellow countrymen, for not doubting my innocence, for giving a good assessment to the years of my hard work of public service for Poland.

The kind words of ordinary people, of whom there are millions in Poland, were a good antidote to the poison of hatred flowing from the political arena. The verdict of the prosecutor's office finally gave Polish politicians the opportunity to deal more thoroughly and more meaningfully with matters pertaining to people who work very hard and who live in poverty. Such people are undoubtedly not particularly interested in who hates whom in politics. These millions of Poles living in poverty would like to have some hope of improving their living conditions, and they have a right to expect this.

I give thanks to all those foreign, particularly European, politicians for retaining an objective view of this affair of mine, even though it was bad for Poland's image, and that they believed the law would be respected.

I wish to repeat yet again in conclusion: I have never been unfaithful to Poland, my homeland. I have never harmed the Republic. Many thanks.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is where I would like to finish. This is what I wanted to tell you. I do not envisage a discussion or replies to questions today because, to put it quite simply, I am ill, and I forgot to mention this at the beginning of our meeting. Mrs. Iza[bella] Sierakowska still wants to say something, but I will take leave of you now. Thank you.

Poland: SdRP Deputy Winds Up Oleksy News Conference

LD2304134396 Warsaw Polskie Radio First Program Network in Polish 1005 GMT 23 Apr 96

[Statement by Izabella Sierakowska, deputy chairwoman of the Social Democracy of the Polish Republic, SdRP, at a news conference at SdRP Headquarters in Warsaw—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] Allow me, ladies and gentlemen, to say something about what will be done next. The legal aspects of the document presented by the military prosecutor's office will be examined. It is clear to us that the matter must be ended. If we think it is appropriate that we should submit a proposal to the Sejm that the people responsible for this should face a State Tribunal, the Democratic Left Alliance and the Social Democracy of the Polish Republic will do this. Thank you.

Poland: Reaction to Decision on Oleksy Case

WS2304144896

[FBIS Report] On 23 April most of the major Warsaw vernacular dailies carried editorial reaction to the dropping of the "Oleksy case" by the Military Prosecutor's Office in Warsaw.

GAZETA WYBORCZA, a left-of-center daily, published a 100-word, untitled, front-page commentary by Chief Editor Adam Michnik. He writes that "the credibility of the state depends on the way in which the Oleksy case is clarified." According to Michnik, "there is only one way to maintain this credibility: All of the materials that allowed Minister Andrzej Milczanowski to formulate the charge against Prime Minister Oleksy and that enabled the prosecutor to discontinue the investigation should be published. Poland must know the truth."

The centrist RZECZPOSPOLITA on page five carried a 250-word commentary by Krzysztof Gottesman entitled "The Issue Will Remain." Gottesman believes that the prosecutor's decision to discontinue the investigation "is good news" because "the prime minister of the Polish Government must not be a spy." He adds, however, that this "does not spell the end of the crisis caused by the motion submitted by former Internal Affairs Minister Andrzej Milczanowski to launch an investigation against Oleksy." He notes that later on there were new developments that "thickened the atmosphere" around the "Oleksy case." "People who had access to documents made statements that might have suggested specific final decisions. As a result of these developments, the public was divided over the possible guilt of the former prime minister and over the impartiality of the ongoing investigation." Gottesman concludes by saying that "the 'Oleksy case' may continue to cast a shadow over public life."

The right-of-center ZYCIE WARSZAWY ran a 250-word front-page commentary by Jerzy Wysocki entitled "A Relief but..." Wysocki believes that "even the greatest opponents of the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) would not be happy if a prime minister of the Polish Government turned out to be a spy of a foreign intelligence service." He adds that the relief "would be greater if Jozef Oleksy had been vindicated by an independent court of law." The journalist proceeds to recall that "Jozef Oleksy and his party colleagues did a lot to give the impression that the SLD, which has a monopoly on power, would do anything to defend its leader. The activeness of Ministers Jaskiernia and Konieczny was clearly an attempt to cover up the affair."

Wysocki believes that "the opposition gained arguments that it will be using for years to come. The Oleksy case will continue to split the political scene and public opinion." According to Wysocki, "the desire to bring the former Internal Affairs Ministry head before the State Tribunal in a situation where the Sejm special commission has not found any irregularities in the activities of this ministry may be seen as a desire to take political revenge."

TRYBUNA, a leftist daily supporting the governing coalition, carried a 200-word, untitled front-page commentary by Chief Editor Dariusz Szymczycha under the "One Hundred Words" rubric. Szymczycha writes that "the stand taken by the Prosecutor's Office is not the end of this drama, which has been playing out on the Polish political scene for several months. Jozef Oleksy has managed to successfully defend his honor and his good name." According to the TRYBUNA chief editor, "instead of the made-up Oleksy case, we will now be dealing with the real Milczanowski case. It is too little to come to the dry conclusion that the minister was wrong and yielded to emotions; democracy must do more than that. The purpose of this is not to take political revenge but to become familiar with the truth and to draw conclusions to prevent a similar disgrace in the future."

All of the dailies, with the exception of NOWA EUROPA and TRYBUNA, carried politicians' reactions to the prosecutor's decision.

ZYCIE WARSZAWY on page two carried a 1,100-word report signed "DW, KAC, SAR, and PAP" and entitled "After the Prosecutor's Decision; Politicians Comment on the Consequences of the Oleksy Case and Its Being Dropped." Lucyna Pietrzyk of the Polish Peasant Party (PSL), chairwoman of the Sejm commission that is looking into the legality of the actions taken in the Oleksy case, is quoted as saying that she believes "the prosecutor did everything that was in his power; I just do not believe that he might have failed to take the necessary actions."

Janusz Piechocinski, a PSL leader, said that "there was no political pressure on the Prosecutor's Office in the course of the investigation. However, we must publicly ask whether, on the basis of the material analyzed, the military prosecutor did not determine that there had been a political provocation on the part of the Polish security services." According to him, "the political scene will continue to be appalled by the accusations that were made public in December; these accusations will probably be taken advantage of in the election campaign." He believes that it would be very bad "if some political circles stated that the prosecutor's decision results from the victory of the SLD in the presidential elections."

Jerzy Ciemniewski of the Freedom Union (UW) is quoted as saying that "it is too bad the issue was decided by the prosecutor and not by an independent court of law." Ciemniewski fears that "the Oleksy case will remain in people's consciousness. In political terms, what Oleksy said about his relationship with Alganov casts a shadow not only on himself, but also on his entire party."

Adam Slomka of the Confederation for an Independent Poland said that "the party's club will submit a motion to the Sejm speaker and ask him to demand that the special commission take a stand. We will also ask the Russian side to reveal the archival documents that include materials on KGB agents."

Jan Olszewski of the Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland (ROP) said that he did not know the arguments of the prosecutor's office, but "this decision did not come as a surprise" to him. He explains that "material collected in operations is very difficult to be used as proof that might be useful in court proceedings." Olszewski adds that, "from the viewpoint of the state, we will still have to suffer the consequences of the affair on the international arena, unless it is proved that people in charge of the Polish security services committed a provocation for political reasons."

According to Solidarity Spokesman Piotr Zak, "the discontinuance of the proceedings against Oleksy proves that little has changed in Poland since the times of the Polish People's Republic."

Janusz Korwin-Mikke of the Union for Real Politics recalled that former Internal Affairs Minister Milczanowski said in the Sejm that he had materials to prove that Oleksy passed secret files to Alganov. Korwin-Mikke believes that he should produce such evidence, and, if he does not have it, "prison is the place he should be sent to."

Konstanty Miodowicz, former head of counterintelligence at the Office of State Protection, is quoted as saying that "the Prosecutor's Office failed to reach conclusions that would have enabled a court of law to institute proceedings. Then the ruling would have been independent."

RZECZPOSPOLITA ran on page two an 800-word report signed by P.W.R., PAD, and E.O. entitled "Politicians on the Prosecutor's Office's Decision on the 'Oleksy Case'; The SLD Praises, the Opposition Reprimands." Izabella Sierakowska, deputy chairwoman of the Social Democracy of the Polish Republic, is reported to have announced that her party would ask the Sejm to make sure that those whose actions led to the Oleksy case be brought before the State Tribunal.

Lech Walesa is quoted as saying that "we will return to this issue after the parliamentary elections next year." He added that those who are "in power in Poland now have shown that they are unable to deal with such a serious problem."

Lucyna Pietrzyk is quoted as saying that it is not a good thing for Jozef Oleksy that the prosecutor's office discontinued the investigation. According to her, "A decision made by an independent court of law would have been far more significant." She announced that the deputies of the Sejm commission would also look into the actions taken by the military prosecutor.

According to Jerzy Ciemniewski of UW, Prosecutor Slawomir Gorzkiewicz made statements that showed that he was "psychologically supporting Oleksy." Also, steps taken by Internal Affairs Minister Zbigniew Siemiatkowski, as a result of which the prosecutor's office did not receive the materials collected by the extraordinary Sejm commission, "prove his involvement in this issue."

ROP leader Jan Olszewski stated that it is difficult to speak about a fully independent decision of the prosecutor in a situation where Jozef Oleksy chairs the biggest governing party, although he no longer holds the post of prime minister.

GAZETA WYBORCZA published on page two a 400-word report signed by "RAF, PAP" entitled "After the Military Prosecutor's Office's Decision; What the Opposition Thinks." ROP Chairman Jan Olszewski is quoted as saying that "the prosecutor's decision was affected by the political atmosphere around the issue. The Military Prosecutor's Office is part of the state apparatus managed by people representing the party that appointed Oleksy as its leader right after the allegations had been leveled against him."

SZTANDAR carried on page two a 300-word report by "bz, drag" entitled "Comments on the Prosecutor's Decision." The authors quote former Internal Affairs Minister Krzysztof Kozlowski as saying that "a prosecutor's decision should not be treated as a sacred one. I can respect only a ruling by an independent court of law. However, in this case legal proceedings were not instituted. Incidentally, SLD politicians have been saying for some time that things would go in this direction, so there was no surprise." He adds that he believes that "some of the arguments presented by the prosecutor are absurd," such as "saying that Zacharski was guided by the desire to take revenge because he had not been offered the post of head of Oleksy's office."

Poland: Presidential Chancellery Member on Oleksy Case

WS2404103096 Warsaw Radio RMF FM Network in Polish 0605 GMT 24 Apr 96

[Interview with Marek Siwiec, secretary of state at the Presidential Chancellery, by Tomasz Skory in Warsaw; from the "Guest of RMF FM Morning Program"—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Skory] I cannot say at which tennis court I am now—I promised I would not. It was embarrassing to see Marek Siwiec, secretary of state at the Presidential Chancellery, in shorts, being smashed with tennis balls by his instructor. Are you still learning how to play tennis?

[Siwiec] All their lives people learn various things, including how to play tennis.

[Skory] I talked to Jerzy Urban yesterday who maintained that when he was holding a senior post in the government, several times a week he would meet with people he suspected of being spies. Do those kinds of things happen to you?

[Siwiec] You know, I meet diplomats, most often ambassadors, and it would probably be impolite to suspect all of them of that activity.

[Skory] You also meet reporters and lower ranking diplomats.

[Siwiec] The Office of State Protection never warned me of any suspicions they have of the people I meet, or if they are investigating this person's activities.

[Skory] Nevertheless, do any suspicions ever cross your mind?

[Siwiec] You know, there is a certain gap between what crosses one's mind and the normality of functioning [as heard]. On the one hand, a person can conduct political activities normally, without applying the formula: I can neither confirm nor deny—and on the other hand, without prattling. There are ways to communicate and, at the same time, collect all kinds of information.

[Skory] How did the Presidential Chancellery view the decision to drop Jozef Oleksy's case? I am primarily interested in the personal aspect.

[Siwiec] In personal terms, everybody has the right to his individual view of the situation. I think that people viewed the decision to drop the case with great respect and with the sense of obedience to the law, just as they had received the prosecutor's decision to start the investigation in the first place. The verdict was made in an extraordinary situation, when tension was extremly high. In a certain sense, I felt relief.

[Skory] In a certain sense?

[Siwiec] All the charges against Jozef Oleksy have been turned down—this has been documented on more than 10 pages. Behind the verdict, there are probably hundreds or thousands of detailed documents. On the other hand, as in any case of this kind and also because of the political aspect, people have the right to feel unconvinced. There are no sure ways to convince everybody at once.

[Skory] Would a court verdict convince everyone? Court verdicts have greater weight.

[Siwiec] Minister Kubicki gave a good answer to this question yesterday. He said to GAZETA WYBORCZA that conducting experiments in a situation when the prosecutor is not convinced of a person's guilt is simply immoral. I do not know how we can suggest conducting such experiments with a human being. Who will actually feel better as a result of such experiments? Is it our aim to satisfy those people who prefer other ways of resolving the issue, thus enabling them to observe the trial for a couple of years and torment Jozef Oleksy both as a politician and a human being?

[Skory] Speaking about tormenting, but not about Jozef Oleksy, do you think that Andrzej Milczanowski will be tried by the State Tribunal? There was a hint to this effect in yesterday's resolution of the...

[Siwiec, interrupting] I think that a different and very rational approach should be applied. Given that accusations against Jozef Oleksy were based on public demand for justice, and a very meticulous investigation into the case of Oleksy's alleged involvement in espionage was based on the same feeling, I believe that it would be proper to satisfy fully this demand to make sure that all the details have been clarified. In that event, all the institutions and groups that have the right to ask questions on the case or to bring a person before the court would exercise that right independently and in good faith. Speculating today on whether Milczanowski will or will not be brought up, or on whether postcommunists would gladly put someone behind bars, I thinks this shows a certain amount of arrogance in the face of the law. I think that everyone should show a much greater respect for justice, including those who make comments so easily.

[Skory] In other words, the issue of bringing Andrzej Milczanowski up on charges should be thoroughly considered and examined. Tell me please, why did the president support the opinion expressed by Prime Minister Cimoszewicz about the publication of the White Book, which would reveal all the materials of the Oleksy case? This would be quite dangerous.

[Siwiec] A long time ago, when the case was first opened and the Prosecutor's Office was presented with charges against Jozef Oleksy, there was a certain unspoken feeling: The case should end in a publicly acknowledged and absolutely reliable verdict in the course of a publicly approved legal procedure. When we talked with foreign politicians, we were often asked: How can the reliability of the verdict be ensured? There is the practice of convening a so-called grand jury in the United States—an authoritative commission that clarifies specific issues without using any legal mechanisms. This procedure is sometimes used in the United States. There is no such procedure in Poland, unfortunately.

[Skory] But White Books are published in Poland.

[Siwiec] This is an attempt to find some extraordinary method of justifying the verdict in an extraordinary situation. Given that so much has been said, so many painful and categorical words spoken and published on the front pages of newspapers, society probably has the right to go back to the sources and find out what actually happened. I will make another reference to Professor Kubicki—who said that being a judge, he likes openness. I think that being democrats, we should adopt openness, too. When such cases are heard, everything should be open except those facts that warrant secrecy. I did not blame the military censor who blacked out passages from the newspaper version of the military prosecutor's verdict because he had the right to do so. At the same time, I am glad I could read the verdict. Thus, the White Book would serve to justify the prosecutor's sovereign decision which, on the one hand, is indisputable; yet on the other hand, it is also important what people think and it is important to convince them completely that the prosecutor acted in accordance with both the law and public sentiments.

[Skory] Let us close Jozef Oleksy's case, then. Finally, I would like to ask what was your reaction to the appointment of Ryszard Miazek as television chairman. You are probably on first-name terms with Miazek after so many years.

[Siwiec] It may sound strange, but I am on the same terms with many people, including Ryszard Miazek and the former television chairman. I regard Miazek's appointment as a new chance for television, for this institution is very pressed for time. It does not have much time for reform and adjustment to the standards of the 21th century and to domestic and foreign competition, including satellite and cable television. If his appointment does not bring about reform and continues to cause political warfare, it will simply be a waste of effort. Television demands hard work and reform. Naturally, certain people should be fired, others should work more efficiently, and smart investments should be made. Those are my hopes—I am a spectator, a citizen, and a politician. At the same time, I am responsible for the use of public funds. I have outlined those tasks for the current television board, just as I did for the previous one.

[Skory] Thank you for this opportunity to talk.

Poland: Daily Reports on Oleksy's Television Interview

WS2404113496 Warsaw GAZETA WYBORCZA in Polish 24 Apr 96 p 2

[Untitled report by "PST" under the "Poland in Brief" rubric]

[FBIS Translated Text] On the "Pulse of the Day" program yesterday, Jozef Oleksy supported the idea of suspending from their duties three officers of the Office of State Protection [UOP] who handled his case—Marian Zacharski, Bogdan Libera, and Wiktor Fonfara. Oleksy deemed the results of UOP operations in connection with his case a disgrace. He said that all of the shortcomings and inaccuracies should be explained in detail. He sharply criticized [former Interior Minister] Andrzej Milczanowski, saying that he "humiliated himself as a professional." He attacked opposition members of the Sejm commission investigating the legality of UOP operations for "leaks" and suggesting he was guilty. Asked whether he considers his longstanding and very close relations with Alganov a mistake (the prosecutor never questioned those contacts), Oleksy said he considers the case closed.

Poland: Justice Minister Interviewed on Oleksy Case

WS2304143396 Warsaw GAZETA WYBORCZA in Polish 23 Apr 96 p 2

[Interview with Polish Justice Minister Leszek Kubicki by Dominika Wielowieyska and Jacek Kurski; place and date not given: "Without Distrust"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *The [Oleksy] case was carried out by an expert from the Prosecutor's Office. The credibility of the far-reaching charges leveled against Jozef Oleksy by [former Interior] Minister Milczanowski thus require deeper thought.*

[GAZETA WYBORCZA] Is the decision on discontinuing proceedings final?

[Kubicki] It is valid. However, this does not mean that it cannot be challenged. Proceedings could be reinstituted if new substantial evidence came up or a higher ranking prosecutor concluded that the decision raises doubts. There is no time limit.

[GAZETA WYBORCZA] What do you think of the decision to drop proceedings?

[Kubicki] The Oleksy case was handled by a prosecutor with a lot of experience in dealing with espionage cases. I have no reason to be distrustful. I can guarantee that the Prosecutor's Office is fully independent.

[GAZETA WYBORCZA] How do you know?

[Kubicki] I asked the prosecutor to notify me if any attempts at exerting pressure on his office were made. There were no such signals.

[GAZETA WYBORCZA] Would it not serve the Polish raison d'etat better to allow Jozef Oleksy to clear himself of the charges in front of an independent court?

[Kubicki] What do you mean—better? The law must be observed. To place anyone in front of a court, the prosecutor must be certain the charges are valid. You cannot take a man to court for experimental reasons or in order to build up the credibility of the state.

[GAZETA WYBORCZA] The prosecutor does not rule out that the Oleksy case was a Russian provocation. How could he have formed that opinion considering that, as you say, the evidence is very incomplete?

[Kubicki] This is only one of the hypotheses based on analysis.

[GAZETA WYBORCZA] How can you explain the radical differences in the evaluation of evidence by two professionals—[former] Interior Minister Milczanowski and Prosecutor Gorzkiewicz?

[Kubicki] The prosecutor had more time to get acquainted with the material. I strongly doubt that Milczanowski studied it that thoroughly.

[GAZETA WYBORCZA] Miodowicz and Fonfara had more time.

[Kubicki] They compiled the material; therefore, they were not objective. I cannot discuss this topic. All I can say is that the case was handled by an expert. The credibility of the far-reaching charges leveled against Jozef Oleksy by [former Interior] Minister Milczanowski before the Sejm thus requires deeper thought.

[GAZETA WYBORCZA] Should he [Milczanowski] be placed in front of the State Tribunal as the Social Democracy of the Polish Republic [SdRP] wants?

[Kubicki] It is too early for me to answer that question.

[GAZETA WYBORCZA] Prime Minister Cimoszewicz said that "the government will try to elucidate the circumstances under which the head of the government was wrongly charged."

[Kubicki] An analysis of the preparatory proceedings should provide grounds for evaluating the operations of the Office of State Protection [UOP].

[GAZETA WYBORCZA] But what for, if the Sejm Secret Services Commission stated that UOP did not violate the law?

[Kubicki] I do not know what the commission said or on what premises because I do not have access to its documents.

[GAZETA WYBORCZA] Do you support the theory of the SdRP leaders that the secret services protected the interests of Lech Walesa's camp?

[Kubicki] I neither can nor wish to give an opinion on this issue.

Poland: Former Counterintelligence Chief on Oleksy Case

WS2304140796 Warsaw GAZETA WYBORCZA in Polish 23 Apr 96 p 2

[Interview with Colonel Konstanty Miodowicz, former chief of counterintelligence at the Office of State Protection, by Agnieszka Kublik; place and date not given: "Something Else Was in the Materials"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *"We claim foreign intelligence services had an information source within our state structures. The Office of State Protection [UOP] identified Jozef Oleksy as that source."*

[Kublik] Did you expect the Prosecutor's Office to discontinue legal proceedings in the Oleksy case?

[Miodowicz] Yes, but I must firmly state that UOP collected material that called for notifying the Military Prosecutor's Office that state security was endangered. I believe the material sufficed for the prosecutor to launch proceedings. That was the only method of verifying the materials.

[Kublik] In justifying his decision, Prosecutor Gorzkiewicz said that the note acquired by our services from an officer working for Russian intelligence headquarters does not meet the processing requirements of the secret services and contains false information on Oleksy.

[Miodowicz] There is a difference of opinion between UOP and the prosecutor on the validity of the material. We claim that the note was prepared by foreign intelligence services and referred to a source within our state structures. Our services identified this source to be Jozef Oleksy.

[Kublik] The prosecutor maintains that, in the course of the famous meeting Zacharski held with Alganov in Majorca, Alganov did not admit that Oleksy was his agent.

[Miodowicz] It would have been very strange indeed if Alganov unmasked his network. That is against the principles of the secret services. Alganov is the ultimate source in the case.

[Kublik] According to the prosecutor, the Russian intelligence officer whom you cajoled to your side was obsessed with the idea of sabotaging Alganov and thus cannot be considered credible.

[Miodowicz] People start cooperating with foreign intelligence services for various reasons. Any counterintelligence textbook will tell you that emotional and psychological motives are very important. Material gain is not the most frequent reason that people decide to enter such a cooperation. Very often they want to give superiors they do not like a rough time.

[Kublik] The prosecutor says that there is no evidence proving that Oleksy met with Alganov after he had been warned by [former] UOP Chief Gromoslaw Czempinski in 1994 that Alganov was a Russian intelligence officer.

[Miodowicz] That means that the prosecutor came to the conclusion that there was no evidence Oleksy continued to meet with Alganov after that date. The UOP materials submitted to the Prosecutor's Office suggested otherwise.

[Kublik] Did they contain the testimonies of witnesses, namely of operational officers?

[Miodowicz] It was operational material that suggested that such meetings did take place. The materials were collected in the course of operations related specifically to this case.

[Kublik] The prosecutor maintains that it was not impossible to rule out the hypothesis that the Oleksy case was provoked by Russian intelligence to distract attention from a real agent or bring about a crisis in Poland.

[Miodowicz] This is a highly theoretical conclusion. Early on in the Oleksy case, high-ranking UOP officers assured the public that the theory of a Russian instigation was deeply and thoroughly investigated when the operational material was being evaluated. And this theory was rejected.

Poland: Reform of Administrative Center Criticized

WS2304134096 Warsaw POLITYKA in Polish 20 Apr 96 p 28-29

[Article by Janina Paradowska: "Three in One, or Leszek Miller's Empire; Ministry of Chaos"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *The government has just accepted an amendment to its project of reforming the state's administrative center. Now the government is sending it to the Sejm. This is the strangest of all strange amendments: A document drastically changing the structure of the central administration is being introduced through the back door, without a plenary discussion, and is being immediately placed on the agenda of the special commission, which is already working on a packet of bills reforming the state's administrative center.*

A question that requires consideration, studying different models and establishing costs, is settled by merging three departments into one and creating a bureaucratic monster called the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration. It is clear that the only thing that now can be said about the ministry is that it is going to be a gigantic machine, entirely unmanageable, yet giving great power to whoever will head it. The amendment is being authorized and promoted by Minister Leszek Miller. He is also expected to be the head of this super-ministry.

Let us repeat: Liquidating the URM [Office of the Council of Ministers], which is a cluster of odd organizational units, and creating a separate prime minister's chancellery has been postulated by nearly all of the former governments, beginning with the 1991 cabinet of Jan Krzysztof Bielecki. Nearly all governments have spoken in favor of creating a Ministry of Public Administration. Usually, administration was connected with internal affairs. None of these models has been completed, although some were scheduled to be finished. A comprehensive reform was prepared by the government of Hanna Suchocka and further work on it was done by the government of Jozef Oleksy. Priority was given to the reform of the administrative center and the creation of a chancellery for the head of the Council of Ministers, that cannot even employ a new secretary without the approval of the URM head. Thus the prime minister's hands are tied.

Removing the prime minister's chancellery from the structure means that a relatively large portion of the URM would remain and something would have to be done about it, especially as the range of responsibility of the "remains" would still be large. Control of the whole of the regional administration, the preparation of administrative reform, the introduction of a civil service, the area of state and church contacts, these issues are only some of the matters of concern. The government of Jozef Oleksy decided to join the remains of the URM with the Ministry of Construction, as numerous matters in that area are in any case dealt with by voivods. That model was presented to the Sejm. Prime Minister Oleksy did not advocate an overall restructuring of the central administration; for example, he did not touch upon the Ministry of Internal Affairs, because a simultaneous restructuring of both the so-called economic and administrative centers might bring about a complete paralysis of the state and a breakdown of an already weak administration. This was rational reasoning. Nonetheless, he changed his mind after he was presented with the known charges against him. He immediately promised a reorganization of the Ministry of Internal Affairs [MSW] by putting the Office of Sate Protection [UOP] under the authority of the prime minister.

Breaking Up the MSW

This move—breaking up the MSW—was done by the government of Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz, and, primarily, by the head of the URM, Leszek Miller. This is included in the amendment submitted to the Sejm. The aim of that move was clearly political from the beginning. Old projects from the time of Jan Krzysztof Bielecki have been dusted off and glued together with what was already submitted to the Seim—and that is how the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration is being created, instead of the projected department of administration and housing. Internal affairs have been moved up to the front line, to comply, somehow, with the Constitution.

The Constitution says that a candidate for the head of Ministry of Internal Affairs—who is responsible for the state's security—has to be approved by the president. Truly, the current minister is no longer directly responsibly for the state's security (it is not quite clear who is, according to this construct; maybe it is the head of the UOP, who is subordinate to the prime minister). Still, he is called the minister of internal affairs. Therefore, the lawyers have said that everything is as it should be.

UOP Subordinated to Prime Minister

Another important part of the amendment is making the UOP directly subordinate to the prime minister, although that subordination is largely theoretical, for there are plans to create a board for the special services, which will include the prime minister, heads of the Ministry of National Security [MON], the Ministry of Foreign Affairs [MSZ] and the MSW, and the head of the government committee for security and defense matters. The board is to be a kind of a programming council aiding the UOP. It is not clear, however, why the council does not include the minister of economy, who certainly would have more to say about program matters (for example, these connected with the intelligence) than all the other ministers put together. Because the prime minister has numerous other duties and will not directly oversee the UOP, the control over the services may be entrusted to the head of the board. Thus practically the UOP will be subordinate to a lower-ranking official, who in addition will not take any constitutional responsibility for that duty. The responsibility will always be that of the prime minister.

Deciding about the mechanical division, the authors have not taken into account opinions (we have published some of them in POLITYKA) questioning the purpose of such an operation. In their haste, they have not given any thought to serious and logical proposals of carving only intelligence out of the MSW and finding an appropriate place for it. What is characteristic and what points to the carelessness of that stacking different blocks together is that not even the rough estimates of the costs of that venture have been given. Yet, it is a rule that justifying the projects of parliamentary bills requires giving information about the costs that are to accompany implementation.

Birth of a Monster

The most interesting of the proposed constructs is the new Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration. It is to be formed from 23 organizational units, each of departmental rank, having a really wide range of interests, from regional public administration and its reform, through housing policy, construction policy, regional policy, communal economy, land management, geodesy and cartography, migration and displaced persons policy, up to the Public Computerized Census System [PESEL], civil defense and national minorities. Additionally, the minister of internal affairs and administration would be the superior of 15 central organs of the state administration that are crucially important: the police (over 100,000 people), the Border Guard (16,000), the Vistula River Military Units (12,000), Fire Service (30,000), and the Central Health Care Administration of the current MSW (14,000 people). There are three higher institutions of learning among them: the National School of State Administration, the Police Academy and the Firemen's Academy. There is even place there for science; that is, for two institutes: land management and geodesy and cartography. Also the bureau of the Council for the Preservation of Battlefields and Martyrdom and the refugee center in Nadarzyn will find their place under the wings of the future minister. Only the Public Opinion Research Center [CBOS] managed, at the last possible moment, to tear oneself free from the protection of Minister Miller. Maybe it was recognized that inquirers from the Ministry of Internal Affairs would not be the most welcome guests for the respondents.

Such a department would be, of course, unmanageable. The minister would then choose for himself matters that are especially close to him; that is, political ones. The rest would be managed by secretaries and undersecretaries of state, who will have to be nominated in large numbers, if, naturally, there is the will to control the whole machinery. In the short run, it is therefore not an idea for a reform of the center that would raise the standards of efficiency, but a recipe for chaos. Truly, it is said that everything started from chaos, but mankind has made a few steps foward since then. Creation of some ministry of administration is absolutely necessary, but—from the start—it should not be burdened with too many duties and should seriously take care of administrative reform, a new administrative division of the country, and the creation of a civil service. Here, as it happens, there is a great amount of work to be done that is crucial for the functioning of the country. With the new model, all the subjects would be lost.

I have tried to learn, first, what specialist discussions accompanied the work on the creation of this department. Second, what is the real aim of this plan? And, finally, what are the opinions about the expected functionality of the structure, which has often been said to be a fairly complete reconstruction of the Organizational Department of the Polish United Workers Party Central Commitee, enriched by elements of the Administrative Department? Just the fact that no critical opinions about separating the UOP [from the existing structure] have been taken into account makes one conclude that there has been no discussion. I have not found even a trace of any other specialist debate, either. Anyway, the short time that has been devoted to creating this amendment (originally, the project was to be considered by the Council of Ministers only in the second half of this year) points to the fact that its creation has been haphazard.

One can, therefore, conclude that there has been nothing else but political will to create an empire for an ambitious politician—plus, the intention to show that some reforms are being initiated in this country. The parliamentary elections are getting closer and it will be necessary to have something to show. Less officially, one can hear that such an apparatus managed by one party alone might be very useful before the elections (the first implementation of the reform is planned for 1 January), especially if it is directed by an able politician. The pretender to the office passes as an exceptionally skillful and effective politician. Such an empire, nonetheless, is not built for the needs of one politician and one party. No one has said that, after Leszek Miller, someone such as Macierewicz is not going to come and take over the whole empire that creates practically unlimited possibilities of promoting one's own people to key offices in the country, from a voivod to the head of the police forces. Such temptations should not be created for anyone. Additionally, the coalition's attitude toward the project is not clear. Doubts will probably appear not only within the Polish Peasants Party [PSL], but also among the Democratic Left Alliance [SLD] members. Anyway, it seems that the government has already assumed that the project will not be accepted by the Sejm in its original form. "The project is not optimal, but it is also not disgraceful, so it can be directed to the Sejm." This is one fairly typical opinion. It is known that Minister Barbara Blida, who has the strong housing lobby behind her, is decisively against the project. It is also no secret that such a reform does not elicit enthusiasm from among the new management of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and this is not necessarily for the reason that the projected plan does not guarantee posts for them. There is also the fact that, from close up, the bunching together the three departments is most clearly visible. It is possible that the part of the government that stands behind the project believes that it will be pass through the Sejm commission quietly. Still, it does not seem that such a plan could be successful. Similarly, it is difficult to think that the government will improve the amendment. It can, however, bury the whole reform, which, in this particular case, could be beneficial.

Poland: SLD Leader on Status of Coalition

WS2304132596 Warsaw SZTANDAR in Polish
18 Apr 96 p 4

[Interview with Jerzy Szmajdzinski, chairman of the Democratic Left Alliance Parliamentary Club, by Joanna Malara; place and date not given: "We Are Paying a High Price for the Coalition With the Peasants"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Malara] Marek Borowski believes that the Democratic Left Alliance [SLD] framework is obsolete, that the Alliance ought to think about transforming into a party. Do you agree with that view?

[Szmajdzinski] Marek Borowski, whom I value for his highly analytical economic mind and his great sensitivity and foresight, is mistaken on this point. The claim for the need to transform the Alliance into a party cannot be defended nowadays, and not only because parliamentary elections are coming up and our supporters would be voting for something that might change or fall apart. SLD is a league of parties, trade unions, and all sorts of associations and social organizations. These are three different worlds. A trade union, for example, is incapable of making a decision to accede to a party. Its objectives and means of action are quite different from those of a party, which is either involved in a struggle for power or has a share of power.

[Malara] This view, voiced by Deputy Sejm Speaker Borowski, did not just appear out of the blue. What portion of the SLD holds the same view?

[Szmajdzinski] A very small share. That is Mr. Borowski's view, perhaps somebody else's, too, and that would be an overstatement. I wish to emphasize that the circumstances are not right for tranforming the SLD into a party. That is not what SdRP [Social Democracy of the Polish Republic] invented the SLD for. I believe the problem lies somewhere else. There were no problems when the party and trade unions were in opposition. These appeared when SdRP became a co-governing party. It takes a huge effort to find a compromise between the clearly assertive position maintained by the trade unions and the tasks a governing party has. The manner and degree of involvement of top union leaders in the political activity of the SLD parliamentary group in the next parliamentary term ought to be considered. It is very difficult for the unions to function in such an arrangement.

[Malara] Is it merely a problem for the unions? Some SdRP politicians say SdRP is paying a high price for the alliance with the unions.

[Szmajdzinski] We are paying a far higher price for our coalition with the Polish Peasant Party [PSL]. The program of the coalition is a far greater compromise than the program carried out within the SLD.

[Malara] How, after its recent conflict with the All-Poland Trade Union Agreement [OPZZ], was SdRP able to "pacify" OPZZ [All-so that even its deputy chairman Stanislaw Wisniewski was placated? OPZZ had leveled many charges against SdRP, such as their high-level job-swapping, and the secret preparation of election lists in provincial areas with names of trade unionists left out.

[Szmajdzinski] Nobody has been pacified by anybody, nor thrown down on their knees. First of all, no such election lists have been drawn. Second, we established that staffing issues within the coalition will always be handled by the parties. However, all proposals advanced by our colleagues from the unions should, of course, be reviewed. Regarding job-swapping, I do not think there has been any. There is a new prime minister, a nonpartisan prime minister this time.

[Malara] We also have a "nonpartisan" president. Let us leave this issue aside, however. It follows from your remarks that you are convinced the SLD has met the test both in times of struggle for power and times of consolidating its position in power.

[Szmajdzinski] With the existing electoral laws and the need to broaden influence in many social groups, SLD is irreplaceable. In the upcoming elections, the Alliance will surely start out with a clear and lucid program for the next four years, one that will enable us to achieve a result at least as good as that in 1993.

[Malara] You said that SLD is paying a high price for the coalition with PSL. How high a price is it?

[Szmajdzinski] The difficulties have to do with the realization of such important issues as decentralization of the state. Reform of the economic center is stumbling ahead with such difficulty precisely because of the position taken by PSL politicians, who view the reform in political terms.

Though PSL will not officially admit this, they have recognized that at the grassroots level they cannot count on very much since their support base is quite slim. As a result, they have blocked the introduction of the second level of self-government reform. PSL is not really interested in reform, but rather the influence they could possibly gain. There are other problems as well; for example, the commercialization of state enterprises.

[Malara] How is the Privatization Minister Wieslaw Kaczmarek able to function after the addition, on PSL's request, of an adjunct on privatization to the coalition agreement and the coopting of the PSL's former Minister of Agriculture Andrzej Smietanko to the privatization ministry as secretary of state?

[Szmajdzinski] Minister Smietanko has only just started working [in this office].

[Malara] Is privatization in dire straits, then?

[Szmajdzinski] There are considerable advantages, also of a budgetary nature, in having privatization, that were previously nonexistent, although PSL's obstruction, even in instances where privatization is necessary, is clearly visible. Let me repeat: even when privitization is necessary. This is because SLD does not believe that privatization is a cure-all.

[Malara] Reform of the economic center, privatization, and what else?

[Szmajdzinski] In the few last weeks an increasing number of elements have appeared in the PSL program that were not part of the coalition agreement. Peasant Party members want them to be implemented to improve their prospects in the elections. At stake are such issues as the land law, the PSL reluctance to reform the social insurance system and the economic center.

[Malara] How does SLD envision settling the question of territorial self-government reform?

[Szmajdzinski] Undoubtedly, in May Minister Miller will present two options of a plan for this reform. One option provides for the introduction of powiats [districts] as subdivisons of very large voivodships. The other option, favored by the PSL, provides for self-governing voivodships in their present shape. PSL politicians have been using the slogan of "voivodship self-government," although they have failed to define just how much power the central government will, in effect, retain.

[Malara] The PSL has voiced its adamant opposition to powiats, threatening it would leave the coalition. Will the SLD agree to 49 self-governing voivodships?

[Szmajdzinski] I doubt if that would be possible. If we wish to effectively decentralize the state, citizens ought to choose their representatives in areas with 50,000 inhabitants, not 500,000. The ability to influence local self-government in such large centers would be mere fiction.

[Malara] Will this coalition carry out a reform of the economic center?

[Szmajdzinski] The government and the social democrats are working on a concept to decide this issue.

[Malara] Will there be another referendum?

[Szmajdzinski] One cannot rule out such an instrument. Perhaps it would be tied to the parliamentary elections or even the referendum for approving the constitution.

[Malara] How do you respond to PSL's threats that it is contemplating changing its coalition partner?

[Szmajdzinski] Not one single serious PSL politician has said this. And even so, there is a long way from the words of a serious politician to concrete decisions.

[Malara] Despite all these problems, are you ready to continue the coalition with PSL for, let us say, one more term?

[Szmajdzinski] Of course. One cannot say today that a split will occur, unless during the election campaign

PSL presents a different program to that now carried out by the coalition.

[Malara] There are many indications that PSL will go on a nationalistic-populist course during the campaign.

[Szmajdzinski] It is too early yet to predict that the coalition is doomed.

[Malara] If, however, PSL swings to the right, where will you look for coalition partners?

[Szmajdzinski] You enter the elections with a variety of slogans, but later something called responsibility for the state emerges. A majority government has to be formed, and compromise is sought.

[Malara] Are SLD politicians still thinking of establishing closer relations with the Freedom Union [UW]?

[Szmajdzinski] Not long ago, in a public appearance on television, Mr. Bronislaw Komorowski was happy to say that the view "never with commies" had triumphed in UW. We are not going to plea. All the more because, in recent months, UW has become an opposition to the opposition and is no longer acting constructively. Its politicians are behaving very aggressively, and are using rhetoric reminiscent of 1990-91. I thought these comments would not apply to at least some UW politicians. UW has done a lot, however, to prolong the implementation of just solutions. Their goal is simple: To show in a few months' time that the coalition is antireformist.

[Malara] So the dreams of coming to terms with UW, enjoyed by many of your politicians, have been dropped?

[Szmajdzinski] They were not dreams. A large part of that party was open to the possibility of cooperation with us.

[Malara] To what degree did the Oleksy case bury these developments?

[Szmajdzinski] Certainly the evaluation of the situation imposed on the entire UW party by its leadership, which SLD never accepted, caused those who had not ruled out cooperation with us, and perhaps hoped for more in the future, to be effectively cured of such tendencies.

[Malara] Right-wing parties are very envious of the SLD framework. Do you expect the rightists to develop something resembling SLD in structure?

[Szmajdzinski] I don't think that they are capable of forming a single block which would be able to function effectively for a full term of parliament. Perhaps two or three coalitions will form, each with a chance of gaining parliamentary seats.

[Malara] Many SdRP politicians scorn all attempts of right-wing parties to unite.

[Szmajdzinski] Not myself. It is somewhat easier for us. The diffusion on the left is not as great. It take a very pragmatic approach to build a coalition. There are a great many very ambitious people on the right, but each wanting to play a major role. Yet only one person can be the leader; the rest have to step aside. We are capable of doing that. Right-wing politicians will continue to have problems until they learn how to do this. The right is also going through a crisis in its political program. It has problems with creating a positive alternative to our program. Basically, what right-wing politicians are doing is revolving around the question of how to form a block against SLD. Yet we don't know what their positive and constructive program is. It is not enough to say they are for Christian values.

[Malara] What role in your political competitors' process of unification do you see for Lech Walesa? He has announced that in five months time he will "blast off like a train engine."

[Szmajdzinski] Oh, these declarations merely elicit a pitying smile. It's just the former president's well-known blabbering.

Poland: ROP Leader Olszewski Interviewed

WS2404075096 Gdansk DZIENNIK BALTYCKI in Polish 4 Apr 96 p 7

[Interview with Jan Olszewski, chairman of the Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland, by Barbara Madejczyk-Krasowska; place and date not given: "If We Go Together"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Krasowska] The leaders of some post-Solidarity parties accuse you of wanting to build your political group on the rubble of their parties. Are activists from, for instance, the Christian-National Union [ZChN], the Center Accord [PC], and the Confederation for an Independent Poland [KPN] indeed moving to the Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland [ROP]?

[Olszewski] During the presidential campaign, many people of various political hues, among others the ZChN and some center-right groups, were on my election committees. The moment those election committees were transformed into ROP, some of them stayed with me. Intending to build a broad movement and not the 260th political party, we have allowed for a possibility of dual membership, assuming that, after some time, particular people and milieux will find a political group that suits them. We are surely not going to destroy other parties or groups. The Polish political scene is undergoing different crises, but we are not rocking the boat. We believe that a natural restructuring of the political scene must take place. And we are surely not hunting those groups that support Lech Walesa's camp. Let us wait and see what comes out of it.

[Krasowska] Will it be possible, jointly with Solidarity, to establish one camp this time, and won't the St. Catherine's Covenant syndrome be repeated?

[Olszewski] The St. Catherine's Covenant was an attempt to find a presidential candidate for as broad a camp as possible. Perhaps I was naive to think that it was a good opportunity, that one should jump at it, especially that the church patronized it. Generally speaking, the venture turned out to be a complete failure. I believe that our current contacts with Solidarity and attempts to conduct talks on prospective construction of a big bloc are not a repetition of exercises from the St. Catherine's initiative. Ours is a rational political discussion with the groups that have the highest rankings in public opinion polls, that have similar, if not identical, programs. Different tasks are assigned to these organizations. Solidarity is formally a trade union; in fact, it is a social movement with great ambitions, assignments, and responsibilities. Yet, at present, it lacks the possibility of performing directly as a political entity.

[Krasowska] It can form an association and put up its own representation. Some trade union activists think it is a good idea. Such an eventuality has not been ruled out by Marian Krzaklewski [chairman of the Solidarity trade union].

[Olszewski] If that were ever to be repeated, it would be another failure of the trade union as well as that of our entire political orientation. Such a way of thinking laid the foundation for not setting up a big bloc in the 1993 [Sejm] elections. Soon after the Sejm had been dissolved, we requested that the Solidarity parliamentary club should take the initiative to establish one big, united bloc. At that time, Solidarity concluded that it would go into the elections separately, and everybody knows how it ended. The smartest politician can make mistakes, as we all do, but one can make such a glaring political mistake only once. If someone makes a mistake like this twice, it means that he should not be involved in politics. I suppose Solidarity will not make this mistake again.

[Krasowska] You frequently stress that one should change the way the reforms are being introduced in our country. In the meantime, [former Privatization Minister] Janusz Lewandowski says that, owing to the reforms, triggered by Leszek Balcerowicz, Poland has become an "economic tiger" of Central-East Europe. He also thinks that, when you were prime minister, you continued this economic policy.

[Olszewski] It is a figure of speech that does not relate to economic reality in any way or is felt by the vast majority of Poles: not by every Polish family—in their own pocket, their own household.

[Krasowska] But, among the postcommunist countries, we have the biggest economic growth?

[Olszewski] Statistically.

[Krasowska] In the Western press, we also are praised for economic achievements.

[Olszewski] One can spread information like this up to a point, and, if one crosses the line, it may become quite risky. I think we have come to this point. Data confirms that unemployment is rising and that there is a growing deficit in the balance of payments, etc.

[Krasowska] The skeptics about the general enfranchisement say that the most valuable components of the state property have already been privatized. What will you do if you come to power? Will you take the enfranchised property back from the communists?

[Olszewski] A great many slices of the cake have already been cut and eaten. But a little has been left. I am not concealing the fact that [Privatization Minister] Kaczmarek's zealousness on that score is admirable, and, despite the most recent results of the general enfranchisement, he is more and more active. I think we can still salvage something. We will endeavor to implement a reclaiming program and introduce changes, where it is possible. We mean particularly such cases as that of the Walbrzych-based factory of Porcelana china.

[Krasowska] At a recent press conference in Gdansk, Janusz Lewandowski said that your political group should be in the united post-Solidarity groups, but under the condition that you will abandon economic demagoguery.

[Olszewski] If our intention of efficient confrontation with the current postcommunist arrangement is to succeed, we must represent a clear, realistic, and very advanced social program. If Mr. Lewandowski wants to erase it because it is populist, then I am very sorry, but we will not have any election business with him.

[Krasowska] But the two camps on the right-wing side can account for more tickets for the Democratic Left Alliance [SLD] because the electoral law gives a bonus to the winner in the form of a larger number of tickets.

[Olszewski] The polls now show that if we form an alliance with Solidarity or have its support, we will beat the SLD and place first, taking the largest number of tickets, even without the help of other political groups.

[Krasowska] Yet, when zero hour strikes, no agreement is made despite the alignment of your programs.

[Olszewski] This situation relates to the whole political scene.

[Krasowska] When, if at all, will the ice be broken in contacts with Lech Walesa?

[Olszewski] One can hardly speak of chilly relations. They have always been very difficult contacts, especially in the election campaign. At that time, Mr. Walesa called me a monkey; another time he said he would shoot me. One has to wait until these emotions fade away. Lech Walesa also needs time to draw conclusions from the previous campaign, which, although it was his defeat, has been detrimental to all of us, too. It would not be good if I played the role of a prompter, telling him what he should do and how he should behave. To a certain extent, I am confident of the political instinct he has shown thus far. Well, perhaps he was a little short of it in his presidency.

[Krasowska] Society is horrified at the state of internal security. Right-wing politicians call for increasing the repression of criminals and for changing the penal law. Do you, as a lawyer, subscribe to these opinions?

[Olszewski] First, let us say who should execute the law. If an antiterrorist group raids a disco and assaults the customers and the owners because they failed to pay extortion money, then what penal law can protect these citizens? The crime is being committed by an elite unit called on to combat the most dangerous crimes. We are following typical communist logic: With them, one did not fulfill elementary responsibilities to protect citizens; at the same time, to calm them down and show that their safety was taken care of, one adopted laws on tightening penalties that nobody felt obliged to execute. And those penalties were not meted out to the most dangerous criminals.

[Krasowska] The recent killing of students in Gdansk, particularly the last one in Warsaw, have caused people to call for making the law more repressive.

[Olszewski] If a killing like this takes place, the police should be fully mobilized. These people should be prosecuted at any cost, brought to a court of law, and jailed for 25 years. That would do.

[Krasowska] But the police have problems in finding the perpetrators.

[Olszewski] The first principle in crime detection is that no crime should go undetected. It is only a question of financial means and manpower earmarked for that purpose.

Romania: Official Outlines EU Integration Strategy

AU2304160196 Bucharest VOCEA ROMANIEI in Romanian 17 Apr 96 p 2

[Interview with Ghiorghi Prisacaru, head of the Romanian Government Department for European Integration, by V. Romanescu; place and date not given: "Legislative Harmonization—Absolute Priority on the Road to European Integration"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Romanescu] There is a lot of talk about the importance of legislative harmonization in the adherence process. How is the government tackling this issue?

[Prisacaru] Indeed, harmonizing Romanian legislation with that of the [European] community is a priority concern in the process of our adherence preparations. This derives from the preadherence strategy adopted by the European Council in Essen (Germany) in December 1994, which stipulates, among other things, that the associated countries—therefore, Romania, too—"must implement legislative and regulating systems and apply certifying norms and procedures that are compatible with those of the EU." It is obvious that this harmonization aims to create the necessary conditions so that, immediately after the adherence, the associated countries are able to participate in the EU internal market—or the single market, as it is also called—that provides for the full freedom of circulation of commodities, capital, services, and people.

On the basis of the White Charter on the Internal Market, drawn up by the European Commission and endorsed by the European Council in Cannes in June 1995, the government approved in December 1995 a national program to harmonize Romanian legislation with the community in the sphere of the internal market. The program stipulates that within two to three years, Romanian legislation on the internal market, covering 23 spheres of activity, should be harmonized in general lines with the EU legislation. Of course, this is an extremely difficult political and technical exercise because it presupposes the introduction of thousands of EU directives and norms capable of ensuring the EU integration of the Romanian society without too many shocks in Romanian legislation. However, one should point out here that harmonization does not necessarily mean the assimilation of certain European directives but rather ensuring their compatibility—that is, ensuring that the meaning and content of these directives are reflected in the Romanian legislation.

In a number of spheres, Romanian legislation has already been harmonized to that of the EU to a large extent. After all, harmonization does not mean only laws passed in the Parliament, but also decisions taken by the government and norms and standards approved by various public administration bodies. At the same time, in accordance with the National Harmonization Program, the government has already submitted for the Parliament's discussion and endorsement a list of priority draft bills on accelerating the reform process and preparing for EU adherence. [passage omitted]

[Romanescu] Is harmonization solely limited to the internal market?

[Prisacaru] Not at all. Romania, like the other associated countries, has pledged to take over the entire "acquis communautaire" [French for community experience] on its joining the EU. [passage omitted] That is why our government pays particular attention to signing and ratifying various accords and conventions worked out by the Council of Europe. Because, as everyone knows, one of the criteria set by the European Council in Copenhagen in June 1993 for candidates to EU adherence refers to the need to achieve the "stability of those institutions that guarantee democracy, the rule-of-law state, the observance of human rights, and respect for and protection of minorities." In this respect, beginning with the drafting of the new Constitution—which guarantees man's basic rights and freedoms as well as the establishment of a state based on the rule of the law—and its endorsement through a national referendum at the end of 1991, Romania presents itself with a positive balance sheet in this respect. At the same time, along the line of further harmonizing our internal legislation with European democratic standards, which were sanctioned as legal instruments by the Council of Europe, the government will give priority to submitting the draft law on ratifying the European Charter on Local Autonomy, which has already been adopted by the government, to the two Parliament chambers, and will finalize the draft law on ratifying the European Charter of Regional or Minority Languages in the coming period, in order to submit it to Parliament, as well.

It is worth mentioning that, in full accordance with Romania's policy of promoting human rights, including the rights of individuals belonging to the national minorities, something also reflected by the Parliament's ratification of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, both aforementioned documents were signed by Romania's Government after our admittance to the Council of Europe.

[Romanescu] Mr. State Secretary, how do you generally assess the stage of our preparations for EU admission?

[Prisacaru] I believe that our preparations are in full accordance with the national strategy for preparing

Romania's adherence to the EU, which was worked out at the initiative of Romanian President Iliescu last year and within the parameters established by the EU for the candidate countries. [passage omitted]

Romania: Melescanu Discusses Goals of Visit to Moldova

AU2304114696 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 1000 GMT 23 Apr 96

[Interview with Romanian Foreign Minister Teodor Melescanu by correspondent Valentin Tigau in Chisinau on 23 April—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Romanian Foreign Minister Teodor Melescanu arrived today in Chisinau on an official visit to the Republic of Moldova. Our Chisinau correspondent, Valentin Tigau, reports.

[Tigau] The visit by Romanian Foreign Minster Teodor Melescanu to Chisinau today started with talks with key representatives of the Moldovan leadership. The head of Romanian diplomacy met with his counterpart, Mihai Popov; Melescanu is now holding scheduled talks with President of the Republic Mircea Snegur, Parliament speaker Petru Lucinschi, and Prime Minster Andrei Sangheli. Referring to the goals of his first visit to the Republic of Moldova this year, Mr. Teodor Melescanu stated, exclusively for our radio station:

[Melescanu] I could say that the goals are, on the one hand, as you know, the participation in the meeting of interministerial committees, which is preceded by a bilateral visit. The specific element of this visit is the fact that tomorrow, in the interministerial committee, we will mainly focus on economic and cultural issues, while today, we will discuss mainly political topics. It will be a political dialogue referring to the judicial framework between the two countries. Thus, in practical terms, today's visit and tomorrow's meeting of the interministerial committees have given us the opportunity to draw here a very clear and exact balance sheet of the stage and, mainly, of the prospects of this cooperation that, for us, is especially important.

[Tigau] What type of political understanding do you believe you are going to reach during the talks you hold with top officials in Moldova?

[Melescanu] Our goal is not to achieve particular understandings, but rather to hold a dialogue, since, both in Moldova and in Romania, these are important years regarding the electoral cycle. Thus, we wish to find out directly from the source what are the political concerns here in Moldova and, if there is interest in it, we will also present elements regarding the situation in our country. As I was saying, we will hold talks on the judicial framework for the basic treaty and for the conclusion of certain conventions in the consular and civilian areas, thus, I could say that this will be rather an exchange of opinion and progress on this path of cooperation than the achievement of very concrete results.

[Tigau] Thus, Mr. Teodor Melescanu will participate in his capacity as president of the Romanian side in the meeting of the Romania-Republic of Moldova interministerial committees that will be held in Chisinau.

Likewise, Teodor Melescanu will attend the opening of the international consumer goods' fair Expocons '96, at which Romania is participating with the largest exhibition area.

Federal

FRY: Avramovic Dismissed as Chief Negotiator With IMF

AU2404081496 Ljubljana Radio Slovenia Network in Slovene 0500 GMT 24 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The conflict between the FRY Government and National Bank Governor Dragoslav Avramovic reached its climax at last night's government session. The so-called super granddad, the father of the new Yugoslav dinar, was dismissed from his post as head of the FRY delegation in negotiations with the IMF. The new head is FRY Deputy Prime Minister Jovan Zebic. Matej Surc reports from Belgrade:

[Begin recording] FRY Prime Minister Kontic, his ministers, and other of Milosevic's hawks are celebrating a Pyrrhic victory today. They got rid of the troublesome Avramovic, who insisted that the former joint assets be divided fairly and that one simply had to agree to the conditions of the foreign creditors.

Jovan Zebic, Kosta Mihailovic, and other economic alchemists now have clear path for their march of revenge on the IMF and those countries that dare to negotiate on the SFRY [Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia] succession by circumventing Belgrade.

Yugoslavia allegedly no longer has anything to lose, namely, according to Avramovic, it was remarked at the government session that for as long as Clinton remains President of the United States, Yugoslavia will not get a cent in foreign credits.

For the time being Avramovic, formally speaking, still holds the post of National Bank governor. Although he insists that he will not print fresh money, he admits that people are backstabbing him even in his own house, on government instructions. The situation in the economy and agriculture is alarming. Despite the emergency measures in agriculture, the sowing is running late, and the country is in danger of hunger. Metalworkers from Rakovica, only a tenth of whom work regularly, have not received salaries this year at all. However, the state-run trade unions have always talked the metalworkers into postponing a march before the assembly. That is why the Serbian regime would like to get hold of the keys to the mint in Topcider to buy social peace and gain time to think of how to retain power with the most dignity possible. [end recording]

FRY: Avramovic Attacks Government in Talks With Metalworkers

AU2404111496 Bad Vilbel VESTI in Serbo-Croatian 24 Apr 96 p 8

[Article by B. Mateski: "Authorities Leading Into Inflation and Bankruptcy"]

[FBIS Translated Text] "It is not backwardness that reigns in Serbia but a perverse economy. Instead of investing the little money that we have in the right investments we are spinning stories and spending money on fast railroads, the Europolis, the Chinese quarter.... As a consequence of unnecessary investments we have starved for more than 50 years, and now the old story is repeating itself. Did we need the new uniforms for 100,000 policemen or could this money have been spent more wisely? Our only, I repeat, only chance of getting hold of the capital that is circulating and foreign aid lies in a radical change of the economic system, which would involve a stable dinar, lower interest rates, and privatization."

With these words National Bank Governor Dr. Dragoslav Avramovic addressed the representatives of the independent metal trade unions at a meeting yesterday when the workers of the metal complex told the governor that he enjoyed the unreserved support of the workers throughout Serbia.

Leveling criticism at the expense of the authorities and their conduct of the economy, the governor said that this only promised "inflation and bankruptcy."

Avramovic informed the workers that he had returned from the Federal Government session at which they again insisted on his replacement.

"They think that it would be better for this country if I am replaced, and one of them even said that the economic situation will improve when Clinton departs from the political scene. This is, unfortunately, what the people at the top think.

"We can resolve the foreign currency problem only by importing capital," the governor said. "I was given firm assurances by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Britain, France, and the United States. However, I cannot win against a small group of people who are evidently getting rich and profiteering from our misfortune."

He added that "a change in the foreign investment legislation" is mandatory in the next six months.

"I support the idea of the workers having a share, naturally not 51 percent, because in such conditions the foreign capital would not come, but 30 percent. In this way the workers would truly become the owners of the capital and would be interested in efficient production.

"There are many cases in the world where the most successful companies are the ones with a 30-percent workers' share. This actually means the realization of the old dream about workers' participation," the governor said, often being interrupted by applause and ovations from the workers present.

FRY: Top Leaders Attend Supreme Defense Council Meeting

LD2304162796 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1437 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Belgrade, 23 Apr (TANJUG)—A meeting of the Supreme Defense Council was held in Belgrade today. It was presided over by Zoran Lilic, president of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the military office of the FRY president announced.

The Supreme Defense Council looked at the question of financing the Federal Ministry of Defense and Yugoslav Army and concluded that it is essential to ensure a steady inflow of funds into the federal budget and their planned distribution in accordance with the Law on the Financing of the FRY.

The Council also examined plans and programs for the development of the military industry.

At today's session the Supreme Defense Council also examined other issues within its constitutional jurisdiction.

Taking part in the work of the session, in addition to the members of the Supreme Defense Council—Slobodan Milosevic, president of the Republic of Serbia, and Momir Bulatovic, president of the Republic of Montenegro—were Federal Prime Minister Radoje Kontic; Nikola Sainovic, deputy federal prime minister and federal minister for the economy; Pavle Bulatovic, federal minister for defense; Colonel General Momcilo Perisic, chief of General Staff of the Yugoslav Army; and Major General Slavoljub Susic, secretary of the Supreme Defense Council.

FRY: Serbian, Chinese Firms Discuss Telecommunications

LD2304215996 Belgrade TANJUG in English 2014 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, Apr 23 (TANJUG)—A delegation of the Chinese company Huavei which manufactures telecommunications equipment and representatives of Serbian Post and Telecommunications PTT Srbija discussed Tuesday in Belgrade their experience in developing telecommunicatons systems and prospects for future cooperation, PTT Srbija announced in a statement.

PTT Srbija Director Milorad Jaksic informed the Huavei delegation of the ambitious development plans of his company, including putting 3,000,000 telephone lines into operation by 2005.

Such intensive development needs large investments and new partners such as Huavei, one of principal suppliers of telecommunications equipment in China which doubles its production annually.

The delegation headed by Zeng Bao Fang expressed particular interest in the development of the telecommunications system in Serbia and and in participating in this development.

The Chinese delegation also hopes to discuss technology transfer with renowned Yugoslav manufacturer of telecommunications equipment Dziti, the statement says.

FRY: Envoy to PRC Reviews Trade, Political Achievements

LD2304173796 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1601 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beijing, Apr 23 (TANJUG)—Yugoslav Ambassador to China Slobodan Unkovic said here Tuesday that Yugoslav-Chinese economic cooperation and trade might amount to 600-700 million dollars annually, while both countries wanted to raise the figure to one billion dollars in the coming years.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (F.R.Y.) and China have good conditions for cooperation, excellent political relations, friendly bonds and mutual desire to expand their economic, scientific, cultural and sports cooperation, Unkovic told newsmen on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the Day of the F.R.Y. Constitution, April 27th.

Unkovic underscored the efforts of the F.R.Y. towards having the Dayton accords and the Paris documents implemented in order to achieve peace in the territory of former Yugoslavia and normalize relations in the Balkans.

Yugoslavia's peace policy has been acknowledged internationally, said Unkovic, adding that after the F.R.Y. and Macedonia had regulated their relations, 12 European Union (E.U.) countries have normalized their relations with the F.R.Y.

Yugoslav diplomacy, said Unkovic, was expecting and seeking a solution for the normalization of relations also with other former Yugoslav republics.

The People's Republic of China has since the very beginning recognized the F.R.Y. and its continuity with the one-time SFRY (Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), and, throughout the period of crisis, had its ambassador in Belgrade.

Unkovic said that Yugoslavia, in the conditions of three and a half years of sanctions, in 1994 succeeded in removing hyperinflation and effecting a 6.5 per cent increase in the gross national product, while this year, after the suspension of the sanctions, it was expecting a 12.5 per cent higher gross national product.

Unkovic thanked the leadership of the P.R. of China for pursuing principled policy in helping Yugoslavia take up its legal place in the international community, and for its consistent policy of noninterference in the internal affairs of other countries.

Serbia

Serbia: Belgrade TV Stops Airing Montenegrin TV News

AU2304140696 Bad Vilbel VESTI in Serbo-Croatian 23 Apr 96 p 8

[Article by B. Velickovic: "It 'Fell Off' the Schedule"]

[FBIS Translated Text] For more than a week now, viewers of Radio-Television Serbia [RTS] have not been given the opportunity to watch Montenegrin Television's Dnevnik evening newscast, which used to be broadcast on the Second Channel at 1930 [1730 GMT]. This, the main Montenegrin Television newscast, has been taken off without any explanation and replaced with old music programs (about the Seven Youngsters Group, singer Miki Jevremovic, etc.).

"The programming schedule has changed as it always does. We want to become competitive. There have been many sports and cultural events, so we did not carry the Montenegrin Dnevnik, which does not mean that it is for good," Slobodan Novakovic, the RTS editor in charge of program coordination and initiatives, told VESTI.

People at the news program department of Radio-Television Montenegro say that they are still carrying the RTS Dnevnik newscast on their Second Channel.

"Nobody has informed us about this. It is not surprising, as there is no obligation to carry the other newscast. Everybody is arranging their programming as best they can. We do not want to guess nor does it interest us why our Dnevnik has been taken off the RTS program," we were told by one of the editors, who refused to give his name.

Serbia: International Refugee Aid Covers 15 Percent of Costs

LD2304202196 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1837 GMT 23 Apr 96

["Pool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vranje, Apr 23 (TANJUG)—Serbian Commissioner for Refugees Bratislava Morina said Tuesday that international community aid had covered 15 percent of the cost of helping 700,000 refugees from different areas of former Yugoslavia who had found shelter in Serbia.

The rest was provided by the Republic of Serbia, Serbian companies and Serb donors from abroad, Morina said during a visit to Vranje, southern Serbia.

Pointing to Serbia's concern over the plight of refugees and displaced persons, Morina said that the current census of refugees in Serbia would probably show that their number even exceeds the previously registered 700,000.

Serbia: SNS Party Warns of Cabinet Reshuffle

LD1904154096 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1450 GMT 19 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Belgrade, 19 Apr (SRNA)—The People's Convention Party [SNS] today warned that secret preparations are under way for a reshuffle of the republican government, which will consist of select members of the ruling Socialist Party of Serbia [SPS] and the Yugoslav United Left.

"In a situation in which the outcome of a dual between Dragoslav Avramovic, the governer of the National Bank of Yugoslavia, and Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic is still uncertain, the SPS wants to have trustworthy people in its government, people who will extend the lifespan of a spendthrift economy," the SNS statement says.

The SNS also says that if the opposition once again allows the SPS to rule comfortably with the support of some 20 percent of votes, Serbia will not be able to recover and become an integral part of Europe for the next 50 years at least.

Kosovo

Kosovo: Serb Ministry Statement on 'Terrorist Operations'

LD2304163196 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1558 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Belgrade, 23 Apr (TANJUG)—The information service of the Ministry of Internal

Affairs of Serbia announced today that between 2025 and 2130 yesterday evening, 22 April, several organized terrorist operations were carried out against civilians and members of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Serbia in Pec, Stimlje, Decani, and on the Rozaja-Pristina road near Kosovska Mitrovica, in which five people were killed and five injured.

Relevant investigative bodies have carried out an investigation and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Serbia has stepped up measures to find the people behind the attacks.

Kosovo: Ruling Party Condemns Attacks on Serb Civilians

LD2304143196 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1305 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Pristina, 23 Apr (TANJUG)—Reacting to last night's armed attacks in Kosovo which resulted in five casualties, the executive of the provincial committee of the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) for Kosovo-Metohija warned today that the incident is an additional burden in the present situation in the province.

In its statement, the executive says that "the latest armed attacks confirm that the Albanian separatist movement has opted for terrorism as means of struggle, thus precluding a peaceful solution to the existing problems in Kosovo-Metohija."

"In the past, Albanian separatists often resorted to terrorism but their target in those days were exclusively members of the police. This time Albanian terrorists were indiscriminate. They carried out their attacks in a treacherous way against innocent civilians," the statement says.

The executive called on competent state bodies to track down the perpetrators of this hideous crime as soon as possible.

Kosovo: Rugova Cautious About Serb-Albanian Tensions

BR2404142796 Brussels LE SOIR in French 24 Apr 96 p 2

[Interview with Ibrahim Rugova, president of Kosovo's Albanians, by Edouard Van Velthem; place and date not given: "The Mounting Tension Between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Van Velthem] Armed skirmishes in Kosovo over the last 24 hours have left five dead. Tension is mounting dangerously in the region between the Serbian authorities and the Albanian majority. Do you fear an imminent explosion of violence?

[Rugova] I have of course been informed of these latest events, but it is difficult to comment on them here, without having all the information at hand in order to make an evaluation. These may be provocations by armed Serbian extremists, but I prefer to remain very prudent: This cycle of violence must not be allowed to do irreparable harm.

[Van Velthem] The countries of the European Union are now, one after the other, recognizing the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which means Serbia and Montenegro. How do you view this diplomatic rapprochement with Belgrade?

[Rugova] I do not see it as positive, because if relations with Belgrade are normalized this will mean that Serbia will be stronger, politically and economically, which could make it more aggressive toward the Kosovars. It is essential for this process of normalization to be linked to the Serbian authorities providing precise guarantees on the Kosovo question.

[Van Velthem] The Dayton agreements on the former Yugoslavia set aside the Kosovo question. Do you have the feeling that the Albanians are the "forgotten people" in the Bosnian peace?

[Rugova] The main aim of the Dayton negotiations was to stop the war in Bosnia. Once this aim had been achieved, the United States and the European countries set about trying to find a solution for Kosovo. I hope that all this will be implemented progressively and naturally avoiding any risk of a further tragedy.

[Van Velthem] The international community is urging an urgent resumption of dialogue between the Serbian leaders and the Albanians. Are you ready to enter into such negotiations and on what basis?

[Rugova] We are ready to sit down at the table in the presence of a third party of international observers or negotiators who will act as a guarantee and facilitate dialogue. We need an international presence down there and I have in fact requested the deployment of an international civil administration in the field. The U.S. liaison office on human rights in Pristina represents a first concrete step in this direction. And I have asked the European Community to follow the American lead. As to the basis for starting the negotiations, each party is coming with its own positions: The Serbs accept none of our demands, so we stick by the referendum on independence we held in Kosovo. We adhere to it even more strongly as it was a perfectly democratic declaration. We will simply accept a transitional period, under international control, in order to arrive at that situation.

[Van Velthem] American involvement was decisive in stopping the war in Bosnia. Do you have more confidence in Washington or in Europe in arriving at a lasting solution for Kosovo?

[Rugova] I requested U.S. mediation and I hope they will also be involved in helping us to seek a solution. They showed in Bosnia that they are able to achieve a result, by cooperating with their European allies certainly, but also by leading the process of reaching a settlement. I would like Washington to do the same for Kosovo, especially as American diplomacy is very much aware of the real problems involved.

[Van Velthem] Recent statements by Albanian President Sali Berisha suggest the renouncement of demands for independence for Kosovo. This cuts off the unfailing support you have had from Tirana until now....

[Rugova] Albania is now a member of several European and international institutions, and must respect certain obligations. But the Albanian Government is continuing to help us within these bodies, putting and arguing our case before its new partners. I do not detect any weakening of support from Tirana, simply new relations of diplomatic cooperation and interdependence. Kosovo has its own territory and borders and we are not seeking to have them changed but simply recognized. It is impossible for Kosovo to remain within the present Yugoslavia.

[Van Velthem] Differences have appeared between Kosovo's Albanian leaders, with the emergence of a more radical current symbolized by former Sakharov prizewinner Adem Demaci. Do you not fear progressively losing control over the situation?

[Rugova] Mr. Demaci is a respected man, he is president of the Human Rights Council, and he is entitled to freely express his criticisms and suggestions. We are in favor of the principles of tolerance, pluralism, and democracy, and it is perfectly normal for intellectuals and political opponents to defend their own point of view. The language adopted at present is perhaps more radical, but on the other hand the majority of people are aware that another course would be very dangerous: We are defenseless, we have nothing, and it is this which explains the control and the reserve of the population. It is not fear but strict realism: The balance of power is totally stacked against us.

[Van Velthem] Since you were elected as leader of Kosovo's Albanians, you have advocated a policy of strictly peaceful resistance to the Serbian regime. But the results seem very limited. If you had the time again, would you recommend another course?

[Rugova] You must opt for nonviolence. It is very difficult, and we pay a high price for it in terms of the tortures, arrests and psychological pressure, and I understand the feeling of impatience among new generations. But there is no alternative. We also hope that the international community will take note of our contribution to peace in the region. For five years we avoided any spread of the Yugoslav conflict and we are continuing to offer an example of pacifism to the other peoples of the Balkans. It is a heavy sacrifice but I remain convinced that it will ultimately bring its rewards.

Kosovo: Albanian Terrorists Said To Attack Civilians

LD2304215296 Belgrade TANJUG in English 2117 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, April 23 (TANJUG)—Serbian police is taking active measures to find the perpetrators of Monday's terrorists attacks in the province of Kosovo-Metohija in which five people were killed and five others were wounded, a police statement said on Tuesday.

The police of the Yugoslav Republic of Serbia said that from 8:25 P.M. to 9:30 P.M. on April 22, people and police had been the target of organised terrorist attacks in the province's towns of Stimlje, Pec and Decani and at Kosovska Mitrovica on the Rozaj-Pristina road.

At about 8:25 P.M. local time (6:25 GMT), a number of unidentified masked persons attacked the patrons of the Cakor Restaurant in Decani, owned by Danijev Stesevic, also of Decani.

The attackers used automatic weapons and a hand grenade, killing Blagoje Okuka of Pancevo near Belgrade, aged 43, Djordje Dragic, 46, of Belgrade and Stana Radusinovic, 48, of Decani, and wounding Branko Babic, 37, of Pristina.

At about 9 P.M. local time, police officers Safet Kocan and Zoran Dasic of the Pec town police precinct were attacked from automatic weapons while on regular patrol. Unidentified persons wounded the two officers who had asked to see their identity papers.

At about 9:10 P.M. local time, Stimlje village precinct police officer Milenko Bucic, 24, of Brus, was wounded from automatic weapons in the village, and succumbed in Pristina hospital.

At about 9:30 P.M., a police patrol in an official car was ambushed on the Kosovska Mitrovica-Pec highway. Dragana Nesic, 19, of Pristina, was killed by automatic fire and Suva Reka precinct police officer Slobodan Dudic was wounded in the attack.

The wounded are all out of danger of their lives, the Serbian police statement said.

Serbia's ruling Socialist Party executive board for the province of Kosovo-Metohija said on Tuesday that the attacks proved that the ethnic Albanian separatist movement in the province had embraced terrorism as its method of struggle.

This might rule out the peaceful method for dealing with the existing problems in this southern Serbian province, the board added.

Terrorism is a method that the ethnic Albanian separatist movement has often reached out for in the past, but the targets of the attacks have been solely guardians of public law and order, the board said in its statement.

This time, however, ethnic Albanian terrorists chose their victims indiscriminately, attacking even civilians, the statement added.

Kosovo: 5 Serbs Killed, 4 Wounded in 'Armed Incidents'

LD2304150196 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1420 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Pristina, 23 Apr (SRNA)—Five Serbs were killed and four wounded, including three policemen, in armed incidents caused by Albanian separatists in Kosovo over the past 24 hours.

Three Serbs were killed in last night's attack on a Serb cafe in Decani, not two as initially reported. Another Serb suffered gunshot wounds to his legs in the attack.

Albanian secessionists also killed policeman Milenko Bucic outside the police station in Stimlje. A woman was killed and a policemen wounded in Sipolje near Mitrovica.

Albanian separatists also attacked a police patrol in Pec last night and wounded two policemen.

Kosovo: Gunmen Kill 2 Serbs in Attack on Kosovo Cafe

LD2304122196 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 0117 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Pec, 22 Apr (TANJUG)—Two people were killed in this evening's armed attack on guests of the Cakor cafe in Decani.

The witnesses, 10 guests of the only Serb cafe in Decani, said that one or several attackers suddenly opened fire from submachine guns from the entrance at around 2000.

According to Mitat Emra, the doctor on duty at the Pec general hospital, Stana Radusinovic and Blagoje Okulic were killed in the attack, and Branko Bibic was seriously injured.

Stana Radusinovic, a refugee from Albania, worked in the Cakor cafe owned by Danilo Stesevic.

Okulic and Bibic are refugees from Knin Krajina. [passage omitted]

Kosovo: University Protests Killing of Albanian Student

AU2404122896 Zurich BOTA SOT in Albanian 23 Apr 96 p 4

[Article by L.K.: "Such Criminal Acts Should Not Be Repeated"]

[FBIS Translated Text] With deep indignation, Prishtina [Pristina] University received the news about the criminal act that took away the life of Medical Faculty student Armend Daci and that was committed by perpetrators who are nourished and supported by the occupying power. This testifies once again to the fact that violence and terror against the Albanian people, and particularly the youth, continues with the entire harshness and brutality perpetrated by the occupier. Prishtina University protests these criminal acts with all its might and demands that they be stopped immediately.

Kosovo: Serb Civilian Kills Albanian Medical Student

AU2404084796 Pristina KOSOVA DAILY REPORT in English 22 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Albanian medical student, Armend Daci (20), was shot dead early Sunday [21 April] morning by a Serb civilian at the Bregu i Diellit neighborhood in Prishtina [Pristina], capital of Kosova.

The Serb civilian fired a rifle from his apartment, in the fifth floor of the block of flats, and shot Armend in the heart. Members of the Daci family and the deceased student's colleague, Kushtrim Sejdiu, said Armend was celebrating his birthday and success at the Medical Faculty in Kushtrim's place till the small hours. Kushtrim said he heard the sudden shot which killed Armend, who was on his way back home, accompanied by Kushtrim himself. Armend's father, Selim Daci, a history professor at the Prishtina-based Faculty of Philosophy, said his son was celebrating the passing with an excellent mark of a second-year exam at the Dentistry Department of the Medical Faculty in Prishtina, as well as his own 20th birthday. Mr. Daci said he reached the spot quickly, but the wounds incurred on his son were fatal. Albanian-medium Medical Faculty's teachers paid tribute to Armend, who, they said, was an outstanding student.

The Serb assassin and his family reportedly vacated their apartment after the Serb police showed up on the spot of the crime.

The late Armend Daci was buried at Irzniq village of Dean Sunday afternoon.

The killing of Armend has shocked the Kosova people. Hundreds of citizens, including Medical Faculty students and teachers, gathered Sunday morning in front of the Daci family's flat in Prishtina to show their grief and indignation.

Incidents and criminal acts perpetrated by Serb civilians have stepped up this year, in the wake of half a dozen years of scores of killings of Albanians by Serb police and military forces in Kosova.

Last January, Serb civilians shot dead two and wounded several Albanians in Decan, at Bin village of Viti [Vitina], and the small town of Fushe Kosova (in Serbian "Kosovo Polje").

Though a few arrests were made after the Decan incident—when Serb refugees killed two local Albanians and wounded several others—in effect the Serbs, including civilians, have acted with impunity and not been held responsible by the regime for what they have done against Albanians. This raises suspicions the killings and incidents have the backing of the Serbian regime.

Serbia itself has likewise been the scene where ethnic Albanians been the subject of Serbian criminal acts. In the town of Nis, an Albanian from Presheve [Presevo] (studying in the Nis University) was killed earlier this year, whereas a local Albanian from Bujanovc [Bujanovac] (a small town in Serbia, just like Presheve) was killed by a Serb. In addition, the case of an Albanian from Skenderaj (Kosova), who was found dead in Belgrade, has not been clarified.

The Serbian regime's attitude towards practices of Serbs acting criminally against Albanians in Kosova has become clear by the fact that the perpetrators have not been indicted or punished. An ostensible exception is the trial of Serb policeman Boban Krstic, who shot dead 6-year old Albanian boy Fidan Brestovci and wounded his parents on 27 July 1994. After a frequently adjourned long trial, while in the meantime being promoted in his job, the Serb policeman was sentenced for the killing of the boy, but on charges of having "endangered the security of the community" (sic!). He got 4.5 years imprisonment, but has been free ("released pending appeal").

The stepping up of terrorist acts committed by Serb civilians against Albanians is a bad omen, analysts in Kosova say, noting that this is a further sign the situation in Kosova has been deteriorating and may escalate towards dangerous dimensions.

Kosovo: 'Peaceful Protest' Draws 10,000 Albanians

LD2304174896 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1700 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] About 10,000 Albanian women gathered in the Pristina suburb of Suncani Brijeg this afternoon in a peaceful protest against the death of an Albanian student killed by a Serb the day before yesterday.

This was the first and the largest protest meeting by Kosovo Albanians since 1992 when 300,000 demonstrated against the closure of Albanian schools.

The Serbian police announced today that last night a number of attacks had taken place in several locations in Kosovo in which five people of Serb nationality, including a policeman, had been killed and four injured.

Kosovo: Primary School Closed Following Terrorist Attacks

LD2304203996 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1958 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Pristina, 23 Apr (SRNA)—Owing to the inability of municipal authorities and the Serbian Ministry of Internal Affairs to guarantee the safety of schoolchildren at the Bratstvo primary school in Decani, teaching at this educational establishment has been suspended.

At today's meeting of parents, teachers, and citizens of Decani, it was concluded that the children will not attend classes until the school is visited by Dragoslav Mladenovic, the Serbian minister of education.

This decision was adopted after a series of terrorist attacks by Shqiptar [derogatory term for ethnic Albanians] secessionists carried out last night in several Kosovo villages, during which five people were killed and several civilians and police were wounded.

Kosovo: 'Provocations' in Suncani Breg Continue

LD2304214696 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 2018 GMT 23 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Pristina, 23 Apr (SRNA)—For three days running Albanian women have been gathering at a location in the Pristina suburb of Suncani Breg where Armend Daci was killed by Zlatko Jovanovic at 0300 on 21 April. Jovanovic shot Daci from his apartment thinking that Daci was a thief trying to break into his car, which was broken into once before.

There is no indication of how long these provocations, organized by the Albanian secessionist leadership and designed to cause unrest in this politically sensitive area, will go on.

Only two to three police patrols have been spotted near the location where the women have been gathering.

Kosovo: UNIKOMB Pledges 'National Unity' of Albanians

AU2004184496 Tirana TVSH Television Network in Albanian 1635 GMT 20 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Albanian National Unity Party [UNIKOMB] held its second election assembly. Some 100 delegates, participants in the assembly, demanded the release of the party chairman, Magistrate Ukshin Hoti, who is being held in a Serbian jail for political reasons. UNIKOMB Deputy Chairman Bajrush Behrami submitted a report on UNIKOMB activity between the two election assemblies. Here is a telephone report by Mehmet Haziri from Pristina:

[Haziri] Although it finds itself in a narrow space for pluralistic political action, UNIKOMB has committed itself to concentrating national energy toward the proclaimed national aims, and pledges concrete action to activate a large part of the population for resistance in Kosova and in other Albanian territories in the former Yugoslavia, Behrami stressed at the beginning of his speech.

The UNIKOMB openly supports the national unity of all Albanians in the Balkans. However, as Behrami said, for the sake of the international image on Kosova the party has taken an active part in the referendum for the Republic of Kosova as an independent and sovereign state and in the parliamentary and presidential elections in Kosova. He stated that UNIKOMB has continuously demanded the constitution of the parliament of Kosova as the highest authoritative body of power and is committed to the institutionalization of life in Kosova.

Giving powerful support to the Coordinating Council of the Albanian Political Parties in the former Yugoslavia, UNIKOMB has insisted on a common referendum to express the will of all Albanians in the former Yugoslavia.

Behrami devoted a part of his speech to cooperation with the political parties in Albania, in particular with the Tirana-based sister party. Behrami also focused on the violence that the Serbian power has been perpetrating against party activists, in particular against Magistrate Ukshin Hoti, who, as Behrami said, has since 1981 been held hostage for the second time by the Serbian occupying power.

The discussions and the political statement approved at the assembly expressed concern over, as it is said, the insufficient articulation of national energy in accomplishing the final aim, but also an objection to all partial solutions to the Albanian problem. The statement stresses that UNIKOMB sees the vitality of the Republic of Kosova as a function of the nation's unity and the integrative processes in Europe. As a party, UNIKOMB pledges to make every effort to organize Albanians with the aim of reaching the final unification of Albanians in their national state. That is why in UNIKOMB's assessment coordination of actions by Albanian political parties and a global national strategy are needed to resolve the Kosova issue and the Albanian issue in general, Behrami concluded.

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